
INTRODUCTION

to

the study

of

MUDRĀ-RĀKṢASA

By Dr. G. V. Devasthali



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BY

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PREFACE

The following pages are meant to serve as an introduction to the study of Viśākhadatta and his *Mudrā-Rākṣasa*. In seven chapters I have tried to deal with all the important topics concerning Viśākhadatta and his play that a student of Sanskrit literature may be expected to know. Chapter I gives all the available information about Viśākhadatta and discusses the problems of his date, patronage, and scholarship. The second chapter gives a detailed analysis of the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* and is followed by an equally detailed critical appreciation thereof in the next chapter. Characters in the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* form the subject matter of the chapter that follows, which also contains a discussion regarding the hero of the play. The sources are dealt with in the next chapter ; while in chapter VI the play is analysed from the view-point of Viśākhadatta's workmanship ; and an attempt is made to point out the various devices by means of which he has succeeded in transforming the dry bones of the tale derived from his sources into an artistic play. Herein are also discussed questions like the three unities, the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* and the stage, and the structure of the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* according to the rules of Sanskrit dramaturgy. The last chapter is devoted to the society as reflected in the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* and discusses also the view, formerly held by some regarding its standard of morality on the whole.

From this brief description of the contents of these pages it will be evident that I have tried to make this introduction as complete as possible even for the purposes of the University student. In this work I have utilized the labours of all my predecessors in the field ; and I thank them all here for all the valuable help I have derived from them. Special mention may, however, be made of the editions of the play by Telang

and Prof. Dhruva, and also of the 'Signet Ring' a masterly English translation of the play with a highly valuable Post-script and Introductory Note by R. S. Pandit.

It is needless to add that I shall feel my labours well re-paid if these pages are found useful by those for whom they are intended ; and that any suggestions for improvement will be gratefully received.

G. V. D.

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CHAPTER I

THE AUTHOR

It is quite a usual experience, painful though it be, of a student of Sanskrit literature to be confronted with insurmountable difficulties in his attempt to gather personal information about any particular author and fix his date even by the century. The authors themselves, for reasons of their own, are more often than not very reticent about themselves; and most of them do nothing beyond giving their own name and that of their work, and sometimes the names of one or two of their ancestors. A few others are found to add the name of their patron or a contemporary ruling prince who very often is found to be almost impossible to identify beyond any doubt. The result of all this naturally is very tantalising to the student of Sanskrit literature, particularly when he finds names like Kālidāsa also tossed to and fro through a period of several centuries. Dates in Sanskrit literature form an unending problem, indeed! And Viśākhadatta is not an exception to the general rule.

Our knowledge about the personal account of Viśākhadatta does not go much beyond what he himself has given in the prologue and the Bharatavākya of his *Mudrā-rākṣasa*. But even there we are confronted with *variae lectionae* which go a long way to create confusion. Thus the very name of the author is found spelt in two different ways as *Viśākhadatta* and *Viśākhadeva*. But this need not detain us very long; for we find that the names of both the father and the grandfather of our author end in *datta*, a circumstance which helps us to conclude that his name also must have a similar ending. Thus we know that the author of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* is Viśākhadatta (a poet), son of Mahārāja Bhāskaradatta, and grandson of Sāmanta Vaṭeśvaradatta.

About his caste and native place we are left completely in the dark. But it may be noted that the two principal characters in the play are Brāhmaṇa by caste. Again in act VII when Cāṇakya is about to touch Rākṣasa, the latter tells him that he is contaminated by the touch of the Cāṇḍālas and as such should not be touched, and the former sets aside his misapprehension by declaring that those whom he took for Cāṇḍālas were none but his own trusted spies.¹ These facts together with the respect shown in the play to the Brāhmaṇas in the prologue,² and the absence of Vidūṣaka³ perhaps may be interpreted as indicating that our author, like those of the *Veṇīsaṁhāra* and the *Uttara-Rāmacarita*, had a soft corner for the Brāhmaṇas; and this may again be taken to suggest that Viśākhadatta himself was a Brāhmaṇa. As for the native place of our author nothing can be said very definitely, though from the geographical knowledge displayed by him one may be justified in concluding that he was a northerner. Beyond that, however, we may not go for want of any sure grounds. 'The assumption', says Dr. De, 'that the drama is a Bengal work is purely gratuitous and conjectural.'⁴ Nor can our author be said to hail from Kāśmīra from the way in which the Kāśmīra prince Puṣkarākṣa is referred to in the play itself.⁵ We must, therefore, leave this question here only and pass on to the next, arising out of the reference in the *Bharata-vākya*.

Unfortunately here also we are pursued by the discomfiting *variae lectionae* viz. *Candragupta*, *Avantivarmā*, *Dantivarmā*, and *Rantivarmā*, and two others which are obvious corruptions of the last one, which itself is rather suspicious. *Dantivarmā* is said to be the reading of several southern MSS and is, on that account, accepted as the correct reading by some scholars.⁶ Dhunḍirāja, a commentator, reads *Candragupta* and some⁷ scholars follow him in this respect. Nor are champions⁸ wanting for the reading *Avantivarmā*. Whatever be the correct reading, it is to be observed that Viśākhadatta is

here referring evidently to a ruling prince of his day. But it is doubtful whether the prince, thus referred to in the Bharata-vākya, is also a patron. In fact there is nothing to warrant such an assumption.

It is, however, obvious that fixing the reading in the Bharata-vākya and then fixing the identity of the prince referred to therein would go a long way to settle the problem of the date of our author. We have already seen that there are champions for all the readings except Rantivarmā and its variants, which makes it impossible for us to fix the reading with certainty. It may yet be interesting to see how attempts have been made to identify the various princes mentioned in the various readings and how our author is assigned variously to different centuries of the Christian era.

Dhundirāja, the commentator referred to above, accepts the reading Candraguptaḥ and identifies him with king Candragupta Maurya, one of the characters in the play itself. This view, however, has been rejected on the ground that the stanza in which it occurs does not form an integral part of the play. Such a reference may only be taken as a eulogy of some contemporary prince. Some scholars,⁹ therefore, suggest that the reference here is to some prince bearing the name Candragupta whom they identify as Candragupta II of the Gupta dynasty. This view they try to justify by arguing that the play shows Kusumpura in a flourishing condition and that Buddhism in the play appears to be still far from its decay and disappearance in India—conditions which obtained when Fa Hien was in India, but were absent when India was visited by Hiuen Tsang. Jayaswal¹⁰ lends support to this view by pointing out that our play contains a covert defence of the scandalous murder of the Śaka Satrap by Candragupta mentioned by Bāṇa in his Harṣacarita. According to these scho-

lars then Viśākhadatta is a contemporary of Candragupta II of the Gupta dynasty, and must, therefore, belong to the 5th century A.D.

Mr. Rangaswami Sarasvati¹¹ on the evidence of several old and reliable Malabar MSS. of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* accepts Dantivarmā as the correct reading and identifies Dantivarmā as the ruler of the Pallava dynasty about 720 A.D. This identification, however, is far from being acceptable for more reasons than one,¹² the most important of them being that this king is not known to have saved the land from the tyranny of the Mlecchas, as he is described to have done in the *Bharatavākya*.

The reading Avantivarmā is favoured by Telang in spite of the fact that he has accepted in his text the reading Candraguptaḥ which he has done evidently to be in conformity with the commentary of Dhunḍirāja which he has published. According to him the Avantivarmā mentioned here is the Maukhari prince of that name, father of Grahavarman, the husband of Rājyaśrī, the sister of Śrī Harṣa of Kanauj. This view has been accepted by Macdonell, Rapson, and Dhruva. There is, however, one more Avantivarmā known to Indologists, the one who ruled at Kāśmīra from 857 to 884 A.D. Jacobi¹³ accepts this identification and holds that the play was actually enacted before the prime minister of the Avantivarmā on the second of December, 860 A.D. But in the play itself we see Viśākhadatta describing Puṣkarākṣa,¹⁴ the prince of Kāśmīra as a mleccha (a derogatory term), which he would not have done had he really been a protégé of Avantivarmā of Kāśmīra.

It would thus be seen that there are two views which appear to be equally strong : (i) that Viśākhadatta flourished under Candragupta II of the Gupta dynasty (375-413 A.D.); and (ii) that Viśākhadatta's patron was Anantivarmā Maukhari (579-600 A.D.). Let us now turn to other pieces of evidence

available in this connection and in their light try to fix if possible the date of Viśākhadatta.

In this connection three points deserve to be taken into consideration one by one. First there is the idea about the moon-eclipse. In the prologue the Sūtradhāra declares that he is well-versed in the Jyotiḥ-śāstra and that, for aught he knows, though the wicked planet is about to swallow the Candra, yet he would be saved from the danger owing to his conjunction with Budha. The idea of the Budha-yoga having a counteracting influence on the moon-eclipse was prevalent before the days of Varāhamihira who has merely repudiated it in his famous *Bṛhatsamhitā*.¹⁵ This shows that Viśākhadatta must be rather earlier than Varāhamihira (c. 490 A.D.). The next point to be considered is the attitude shown by our poet towards Jainism and Buddhism. In Act VII St. 5 the deeds of the Buddhas are referred to with great respect¹⁶ which shows that Buddhism was yet held in good esteem. This naturally points to a date far anterior to that of its decay after the seventh century. Reference to the trouble of the Mlecchas in the *Bharata-vākya*¹⁷ is the last point that we may note here. Wilson¹⁸ identifies the Mlecchas with the Pathan princes and assigns the play to the 11th or the 12th century. Talang,¹⁹ on the other hand, is inclined to identify the Mlecchas as the early Muhomedan invaders of India and assigns the work to the 7th century A.D. Mcdonell and Rapson agree with him. But it is not unlikely that by Mlecchas are to be understood the Hūṇas who were a growing menace in the Gupta period. It is even more probable that this plot suggested itself to our author on account of the identity of the names of the princes.

The date problem has been attacked in yet another direction on the basis of resemblances of ideas and phraseology between the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* on the one hand and some other works in Sanskrit literature on the other. Thus it is found

that the second benedictory stanza of our play closely resembles the Harivijaya, II. 55-56 of Ratnākara, a court-poet of Avantivarmā of Kāśmīra. But this resemblance only proves our author's priority over Ratnākara, since, as we have already seen above, this Avantivarmā can't be the prince referred to by him. A similar resemblance is to be noticed between Mu. Rā. IV. 10 and the Kirātārjuniya II. 47 cd. of Bhāravi who belongs to the close of the 5th century A.D. Raghuvamśa VII. 43 & 56 have again been adduced as parallels to Mu. Rā. V. 23 and VII. 21 respectively. But the coincidences here are only too feeble to be of any use in settling the question of chronology for good. The same perhaps may be said about the coincidence between Mu. Rā. I. 14d and the Śiśupālavadha, XVI. 84d; for though the change of *ca* into *api* has been declared to be introduced by Māgha merely for the sake of change, it must be admitted that this may not be accepted as a very conclusive evidence for fixing the date of Viśākhadatta.²⁰ Resemblances between our play and the Mṛcchakaṭika are indeed close and numerous also²¹; and it would not be wrong to conclude on their strength that our author had the Mṛcchakaṭika before him when he composed the present play. But this does not help us much in fixing the date of Viśākhadatta since the date of the Mṛcchakaṭika itself is as yet an open problem. There is one more case of this type. Mu. Rā. II. 17 is found to correspond to the 27th stanza of Bhartṛhari's Nitiśataka. From this it is argued that the Mudrārākṣasa is earlier than 651 A.D., the year in which Bhartṛhari is said to have passed away. But even here a difficulty crops up owing to the presence of *varia lectio* viz. "°ṇās tvam ivodvahanti" or "°nā na parityajanti". If the former is the genuine reading we shall have to conclude that the stanza primarily belongs to the play because of the dramatic mode of expression in which it is couched. Bhartṛhari would in that case be the borrower and hence later than our author.

But if the second reading is genuine the tables would be turned just the opposite way thus proving the priority of Bhartṛhari over Viśākhadatta. There is also a third probability of both the authors having borrowed from some common source. The author of the *Daśarūpāvaloka*²² accepts the first reading as given above and attributes the stanza to Bhartṛhari. This circumstance adds to our difficulty and makes the problem still more trite. In general, however, it may here be observed that any attempt to fix the date of our author on the strength of verbal resemblances between *Mu. Rā.* on the one hand and some other works in Sanskrit literature on the other is bound to be futile, though such resemblances may at the most be taken to indicate a probability in a certain direction.

Let us now turn to the external evidence that is available for fixing the date of Viśākhadatta. There are several commentaries²³ on the *Mudrā-rākṣasa*. But none of these is known to be earlier than about the middle of the 14th century A.D. The same is the case with the other versions²⁴ of the story of the play, both in prose as well as in verse, the earliest of these being the prose version of Ananta Paṇḍita (first half of the 17th century A.D.). Thus we find that the evidence supplied by these is not of much value for our purposes. Among anthologies we find only two containing verses ascribed to Viśākhadatta or Viśākhadeva. Vallabhadeva in his *Subhāṣitāvalī* has quoted two verses²⁵ of Viśākhadeva whom Mr. Peterson identified with the author of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa*. This identification is not generally accepted, nor are the verses in question to be found in our play. *Srīdharadāsa* in his *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* has given two stanzas²⁶ as composed by Viśākhadatta. Even these are not to be traced in the *Mudrā-rākṣasa*. But if the author of these stanzas is the same as our author he can be placed before 1205 A.D. The earliest work to quote from the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* and refer to it by name is the *Daśarūpāvaloka* of Dhanika (10th century A.D.). It,

therefore, follows that Viśākhadatta is much earlier than the 10th century A.D. There is, however, one more passage²⁷ in the *Daśarūpāvaloka* which has been utilised by some scholars in this connection. Thus at the end of the first chapter of the work we find the remark '*Bṛhatkathāmūlam mudrārākṣasam*' from which it would appear that the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* is based on the *Bṛhatkathā*. But this passage itself has been proved to be spurious and hence quite unreliable.²⁸

We have thus far seen that Viśākhadatta has been variously assigned to several centuries upto the 12th. Of these several theories, however, there are only two which have some probability about them. The theory that Viśākhadatta was a contemporary of the great Gupta emperor Candragupta II has to face 'the difficulty of taking the term *Mleccha* in the sense of the *Hūṇas* and of explaining the word *udvejamānā* satisfactorily in terms of the known facts of Candragupta's time.' The theory that Viśākhadatta flourished under Avantivarmā Maukhari, on the other hand, is vitiated by the discovery made by Hillabrandt's critical edition of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* that the variant Avantivarmā is most probably a later emendation.²⁹ The question of Viśākhadatta's date must, therefore, be regarded as unsolved, though in the light of the evidence discussed so far one may be justified in placing him among the older group of dramatists who succeeded Kālidāsa and flourished much before the 9th century A.D.³⁰

Let us now pass on to discuss the scholarship of Viśākhadatta. Here at the very outset it may be observed that a drama is not a work where an author may be expected to parade his scholarship and learning; and yet it is but natural that some glimpses of the author's knowledge of various branches of literature and arts and also his varied experiences may be found in his work. There is, therefore, nothing unnatural in trying to gather all such glimpses from a work and try to form, on their basis, some idea about the scholarship of

its author. If we read the *Mudrārākṣasa* from this point of view we shall find Viśākhadatta showing his acquaintance, (and sometimes even proficiency) not only with *belles-lettres* but also with scientific works and also with fine arts. To even a casual reader is evident the mastery of Viśākhadatta over the Sanskrit language and its grammar. The very fact that he has in his *Mudrārākṣasa* used no less than seventeen metres,³¹ and quite successfully too, is enough to show that he has good acquaintance with Sanskrit prosody. Variation of style in accordance with the subject-matter and the use of various figures of speech bear ample testimony to his knowledge of *Sāhitya-śāstra*. That he must have studied dramaturgy and acquired proficiency in it can very well be seen from the way in which he has succeeded in shaping a highly interesting play out of the sordid and crude material that he could gather from his sources, historical as well as Pauranic. But that is not all. In two places at least he has referred to technicalities of dramaturgy, thus showing his deep interest and proficiency in that science. Thus in the sixth act of the *Mudrārākṣasa* when Siddhārthaka tells Samiddhārthaka that Malayaketu has been captivated by Bhadrabhaṭa and others the latter in wonder, asks how it could be ; for Bhadrabhaṭa and others were known to have resorted to Malayaketu out of disaffection for Candragupta. It is here that Samiddhārthaka by way of comparison adds that the situation was just like a drama composed by an inferior playwright in which the matter in the beginning (i.e. mukhasandhi) differs widely from that in the end (i.e. nirvahanasandhi).³² The reference here to the two sandhis and also to the rule, that the matter in both these sandhis must be the same for a drama to be successful, shows clearly that Viśākhadatta was very well acquainted with *Nāṭyaśāstra*. The same again is shown by the third stanza³³ of the fourth act of the *Mudrārākṣasa* where Rākṣasa compares the worries of a minister like himself to those of a play-

wright ; and while doing so uses certain technical terms of dramaturgy. In fact this stanza has been quoted by Vāgbhaṭa in his Kāvyaṇuśāsana as showing Viśākhadatta's proficiency in nāṭyaśāstra. The use of the various Prakrits in the play can be taken to be indicative of Viśākhadatta's acquaintance with and mastery over the Prakrits. Through one of his characters Viśākhadatta would even seem to declare that he is also a prākṛta kavi.³⁴

Indications are not wanting of the sound knowledge of Viśākhadatta of other branches of scientific literature. The whole play is deeply saturated in a political atmosphere. The plots and the counter-plots of Rākṣasa and Cāṇakya, the bristling crowd of spies on either side, the atmosphere charged with suspicion, trials and punishments, and the highly political discussion between Cāṇakya and Candragupta—all these show Viśākhadatta's deep knowledge of Arthaśāstra. The impression thus gathered is further confirmed by the exuberant use of the technical terms³⁵ of Arthaśāstra almost at every step. There is also a direct reference to the arthaśāstrakārāḥ in general and to the Daṇḍanīti³⁶ of Uśanas in particular. The other science in which our author seems to be proficient is the jyotiḥśāstra. In the very prologue of our play we find the sūtradhāra referring to his proficiency in this science with all its sixty-four parts and declaring that there would be no moon-eclipse that day since the conjunction with Budha is sure to save the moon from the danger.³⁷ We have already observed above that the idea about the moon-eclipse being counter-acted by the budha-yoga belongs to the Saṁhitā period i.e. prior to the date of Varāhamihira. Again we are told that Jīva-siddhi the kṣapaṇaka is only a Brāhmaṇa named Induśarman who is proficient not only in politics but also in *catuḥśaṣṭyaṅga jyotiḥśāstra*.³⁸ A deeper knowledge of this science is displayed by the author in Act IV where Rākṣasa requests the monk to find out an auspicious day for him to start an expedition ; and

the latter in very technical terms points out that the evening of that very day (it was full-moon day of Mārgaśīrṣa) was very auspicious, indeed ! And when Rākṣasa raises an objection saying that the *tithi* was not quite auspicious, the monk points out that the influence of *nakṣatra* and *lagna* is four and sixty-four times respectively as much as that of the *tithi*, so that it would not be wise on the part of Rākṣasa to let such auspicious day pass off simply in view of the *tithi*. He also adds further that the lagna of Budha is very auspicious and that Rākṣasa would derive great benefit if he goes by the auspicious influence of the moon.³⁹ From all this it will be quite evident that Viśākhadatta was a deep student of the jyotiḥśāstra. The other śāstra which our author seems to have thoroughly mastered is the nyāya. The Mudrā-rākṣasa V. 10⁴⁰ speaks of the five conditions which every *hetu* has to satisfy if it is to be valid, and also of the fallacies arising from the violation of one or more of these conditions. It also contains the technical term *nigraha* ; and the fact that the nyāya terminology has been utilised by our poet for a simile to illustrate the conditions which crown a king with success or land him into disaster and defeat is enough to convince the reader of Viśākhadatta's proficiency in Nyāya.

Viśākhadatta has also shown his acquaintance with our mythology by referring to the *tāṇḍava* dance of God Śiva in his *nāndī*,⁴¹ to the idea of God Viṣṇu waking up in the month of Kārtika⁴² (on the *ekādaśī*, which on that account is called the *prabodhinī ekādaśī*), to the story of the śakti conferred by Indra on Karna who had preserved it really for destroying Arjuna, but had to spend it on Ghaṭotkaca, son of Bhīma by Hidimbā,⁴³ to the destruction of the Vṛṣṇis,⁴⁴ and to the famous story of king Śibi offering his own flesh just to save a pigeon from a falcon⁴⁵ (who were in fact Agni and Indra respectively so disguised). Viśākhadatta seems to be acquainted not only with the Brahmanical religion and also the pauranic

idea of feeding Brāhmaṇas at the time of the moon-eclipse⁴⁶ or some festive occasions or of giving away things belonging to the deceased to Brāhmaṇas by way of obsequial gifts,⁴⁷ but also with the so-called heretical systems of Buddhism and Jainism.⁴⁸ Of the fine arts we find the art of painting referred to in one place⁴⁹ in our play ; and we may reasonably infer from that reference that Viśākhadatta had some acquaintance with that art also.

We may now bring this chapter to a close by making a brief reference to the other works ascribed to our author. Here it must be observed at the very outset that no other work of Viśākhadatta has come down to us in any form, though from references in other works he would possibly seem to have composed some more works beside the *Mudrā-rākṣasa*. Thus we find Rāmacandra and Guṇacandra quoting seven times from a work named *Devīcandragupta*,⁵⁰ ascribing it to Viśākhadeva. This work has not as yet been unearthed ; but from references and citations it would appear that it is a drama in five acts, if not more, dealing in all probability with the story of Kumāra Candragupta in the guise of a woman rescuing Dhruvadevī who had been abducted by a Śaka prince. This work is again referred to by Bhoja in his *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa* and also by Abhinavagupta in his commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata, of course, without naming the author.⁵¹ *Abhisārikāvañcitaka* or *Abhisārikābandhitaka* is yet another work⁵²—again a drama in all probability—which has been referred to and quoted from by both Abhinavagupta as well as Bhoja. This also is ascribed to Viśākhadeva. It is based on a love legend of Udayana and Padmāvatī. The former left the latter under the suspicion that she had killed his son, when disguising herself as a Śabarī and playing the role of an *abhisārikā*, the latter won back the love of her tender-minded husband. It must here be observed that both these works are said to be the work of Viśākhadeva (and not Viśākhadatta)

whose identity with the author of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* is by no means very definitely established. Prof. Dhruva⁵³ has pointed out that the *Sadukti-karṇāmṛta* quotes two stanzas ascribing them to Viśākhadatta; and concludes that our author must have composed another drama based on the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Besides these there are two *anuṣṭubh* verses⁵⁴ which in the *Subhāṣitāvalī* are ascribed to Viśākhadeva whom Dr. Peterson is inclined to identify with the author of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa*, relying on the variant reading in the prologue which would give the author's name as Viśākhadeva. This identification has, however, not been generally accepted. Our author can, therefore, be said to have composed only one play to be sure, while the ascription of the other works or plays to him is rather doubtful depending as it does on the assumption of the identity of our Viśākhadatta with that of the *Subhāṣitāvalī* and also with Viśākhadeva referred to by Bhoja, Abhinavagupta, and others.

CHAPTER II

THE PLOT

The Prologue

After the recital of the nāndī suggestive of the arduous task and the limitations that Cāṇakya has set himself and also the crooked policies involved in the whole affair, the stage-manager appears on the stage saying that he has been asked to enact the *Mudrā-rākṣasa*, a fresh play from the pen of the poet Viśākhadatta, son of Mahārāja Bhāskaradatta, and grand-son of Sāmanta Vāṭeśvaradatta. He is quite confident of success in his undertaking since he has been fortunate enough to have an appreciative audience. So he proposes to have some music ; and hence turns homeward. Entering his home he finds all the inmates there very hotly busy in grand preparations. His curiosity is roused and he calls his wife and asks her the occasion for all this. He is told in reply that Brāhmaṇas have been asked to dinner ; for it is reported that there was going to be a moon-eclipse that day. The stage-manager assures his wife that the rumour was quite baseless ; for from what he knows of astronomy—and that is not a little—he can see that the malicious planet is about to swallow the Candra, full as he is ; but that its conjunction with Budha is sure to save the Candra from the danger. While the stage-manager is thus assuring his wife, from behind the curtain is heard the question as to who dared to attack Candra as long as he was there ? The naṭī wonders who it was that, creature of this mortal world that he is, had the ambition of saving the Candra against the attack of a planet. The stage-manager, in order to make the person repeat his question, repeats what he has already said and on listening to the question recognizes

that it was Cāṇakya who has mistaken the whole context and understood candra-graḥaṇa in his speech to stand for an attack on Candragupta by the enemy. At this the stage-manager leaves the stage along with his wife; and Cāṇakya appears on the stage repeating the same question in an angry mood.

ACT I

Cāṇakya, as we have already seen, has appeared on the stage in an agry mood. Then taking his seat on a chair to which his attention is drawn by his pupil, he indulges in a monologue which makes us acquainted with his various schemes and plots and also the purpose behind them all. He begins by complaining against the publicity received among the citizens of Kusumpura by the fact that Rākṣasa, incensed by the destruction of the Nanda race, has formed an alliance with Malayaketu roused to anger by the assasination of his father and is preparing to launch an attack on Candragupta with a vast army. Soon, however, he regains his confidence and declares that he can check all such rumours and adds that he, inspite of the fulfilment of his vow, will continue to be Candragupta's minister till Rākṣasa is yoked into the service of the latter. It is with this end in view alone that he has caused the last scion of the Nanda race, Sarvārthasiddhi, to be assassinated. But instead of being disheartened thereby, Rākṣasa has still continued his loyalty to his former masters and made all the greater efforts to destroy Candragupta and his party by forming an alliance with Malayaketu. It is on account of this very noble trait in his character that Cāṇakya desires so ardently to win over Rākṣasa to Candra-gupta.

Various indeed are the measures taken by Cāṇakya to accomplish his object. He has set afloat a rumour that it was Rākṣasa who has killed Parvataka, an ally of Candragupta (and consequently of Cāṇakya) through a poison-maiden. To give full credence to this rumour he has scared away Malaya-

ketu, the son of Parvataka, through Bhāgurāyaṇa by letting him know that his father was killed by Cāṇakya. Spies under various disguises have been employed with a view to ascertain the loyalty or otherwise of the people. Trustworthy persons of veritable integrity and devotion have been employed as aide-de-camp of Candragupta. And last, but not the least, a dear friend versed in politics and astronomy has already been sent to form close friendship with all the ministers of the Nandas under the guise of a Kṣapaṇaka. Thus Cāṇakya is now quite confident that but for Candragupta's indifference towards administrative affairs nothing is amiss on their side. He, at the same time, does not fail to appreciate the attitude of indifference shown by Candragupta.

While Cāṇakya is thus indulging in his monologue *within*, one of his spies (Nipuṇaka) in the guise of a yāmapaṭika is seen *without* singing in praise of Yama, and trying to enter into the abode of Cāṇakya. At the door, however, he is stopped by Cāṇakya's pupil, who takes all his talk to be only irrelevant and nonsensical. Cāṇakya, of course, catches the inner significance of the remarks and asks him to come in. At once Cāṇakya recognizes him to be Nipuṇaka and asks him to give an account of his mission.

Nipuṇaka tells that all were deeply attached to Candragupta, except three viz. (i) Jīvasiddhi, a monk, who is reported to have directed the poison-maiden sent by Rākṣasa to Parvateśvara ; (ii) Śakaṭadāsa, a dear friend of Rākṣasa ; and (iii) Candanadāsa, a very rich jeweller with whom Rākṣasa has kept his wife and children before leaving the capital. Cāṇakya knows that the first is none but his own dear friend ; and that the second is only a kāyastha, to manage whom Siddhārthaka has already been directed. The third, he concludes, must be Rākṣasa's dearest friend ; and asks how Nipuṇaka came to know that Rākṣasa's family was with him. When Nipuṇaka in reply only produces Rākṣasa's signet ring, Cāṇakya in joy

says to himself that it is not the ring but Rākṣasa himself that has fallen into his hands.

At Cāṇakya's desire Nipuṇaka then narrates how as he was singing his songs and displaying the yamaṭaṭa at the house of Candanadāsa, a bonny child about five years old came out of an apartment and after a hue and cry was taken back per force by one woman whom he could not clearly see. In that confusion, however, a ring dropped down from the hand of the woman and rolled on to him without being noticed by her. Finding that it bore the name of Rākṣasa he thought it fit to hand it over to Cāṇakya. Nipuṇaka is promised good reward for all this service and given leave to depart.

The ring now sets Cāṇakya thinking. He orders ink and paper to be brought and is thinking out the contents of his proposed letter by which Rākṣasa must be captured, when a messenger comes in with Candragupta's request to be allowed to perform the obsequies of Parvateśvara and give away the latter's ornaments to Brāhmaṇas. Cāṇakya readily grants the request, only desiring Candragupta to give the ornaments to the worthy Brāhmaṇas who would be sent by him after properly putting them to test. Immediately Cāṇakya through his pupil directs three Brāhmaṇas, all brothers, to receive the ornaments from Candragupta and see him with the same.

All this, he declares, very well forms the latter part of his proposed letter. After a little thought he fixes up the earlier part also and it pertains to the five great Mleccha princes, great friends of Rākṣasa. He was about to write their names in the letter, but suddenly he changes his mind and chooses to keep the contents only vague. Completing the letter he asks his pupil to ask Siddhārthaka to get the letter written by Śakaṭadāsa without any address thereon and without letting him know that he was doing it for Cāṇakya, and then see him. At this stage Cāṇakya is quite confident that now Malaya-keṭu is within his clutches. When Siddhārthaka comes with

the letter as directed, Cāṇakya appreciates the beautiful hand of Śakaṭadāsa and asks the former to seal it with the ring (of course, of Rākṣasa). When that is done he further tells him that he should first scare away the executioners and take away Śakaṭadāsa from the place of execution to Rākṣasa, and receiving a reward from the latter for having rescued his friend be in his service for some time. Then as the enemies approached Kusumapura, he is to do something which Cāṇakya whispers into his ear and is kept a secret at this stage.

Having thus settled his future plans for the capture of Malayaketu, Cāṇakya now, on behalf of Candragupta, orders Kālapāśika and Daṇḍapāśika to banish Jīvasiddhi with disgrace on the charge of having killed Parvateśvara with a poison-maiden under the direction of Rākṣasa; and to impale Śakaṭadāsa, who under instructions from Rākṣasa again has always been encouraging people to plot against the life of Candragupta, and throw all his family into prison. Now as Cāṇakya wonders whether Rākṣasa would be captured, Siddhārthaka requests that he has understood all that he was asked to do and that he should be allowed to depart. Cāṇakya, thereon, hands over the letter and the signet ring to him and the former leaves the place.

In the meanwhile the pupil returns saying that Kālapāśika and Daṇḍapāśika are doing what they are told to do. He is then asked to bring Candanadāsa. Now this latter has his own suspicions and declares that he has directed Dhanadāsa and others to carry away the family of Rākṣasa to some safer place. On knowing of his arrival, Cāṇakya very courteously asks him to take his seat; and with great insistence compels him to do so. After preliminary enquiries about his trade Cāṇakya directly asks Candanadāsa whether the defects of Candragupta reminded the people of the good qualities of the former kings. On knowing from Candanadāsa that people are far happier under the rule of Candragupta, Cāṇakya declares

that kings also seek some gratification in return, not, however, in the form of money like the former kings, but in the form of absence of affliction, which would result from an attitude not hostile to the king. Candanadāsa desires to know who has been suspected of being hostile to the king and is told in plain terms that he is the foremost among such persons, since he is sheltering Rākṣasa's family in his house. When Candanadāsa pleads that the charge is baseless, Cāṇakya tells him that it is not their existence in one's house so much as the concealment of that fact that constitutes a crime. Thereon the latter tells that the family of Rākṣasa was with him for some time ; but that it is not there at the moment and that he is not aware of its whereabouts. He is thereon threatened by Cāṇakya. Just at this moment a great tumult is heard outside, not once but twice ; and on enquiry, it is known that Jīvasiddhi and Śakaṭadāsa, who were plotting against the king, were being led to be severely punished. Cāṇakya asks Candanadāsa to be wise enough to save himself and his family from a similar fate by surrendering Rākṣasa's family. But in spite of repeated threats Candanadāsa refuses to do so. Cāṇakya very highly appreciates this attitude of Candanadāsa ; but pretending to be enraged he sends orders to Vijayapāla to imprison Candanadāsa and his family and confiscate his property ; and adds that Candragupta would order his execution. Candanadāsa is, however, unmoved ; for, as he said, his fall is due to some service to a friend and not to some personal misconduct. Here Cāṇakya expresses his conviction that Rākṣasa would certainly try to save Candanadāsa and would thus be in his hands.

At this stage the pupil brings the news that Siddhārthaka has taken away Śakaṭadāsa from the place of execution. Cāṇakya is only glad to find that Siddhārthaka has made a beginning ; but outwardly pretends to be angry and directs his pupil to ask Bhāgurāyaṇa to make the necessary arrangements. But

he also is found to have run away. Then a word is sent to Bhadrabhaṭa and others to catch Bhāgurāyaṇa. But the pupil comes to know that even they have absconded ; and feels that every thing was going wrong with his preceptor. But Cāṇakya knows the facts behind these events and hence he silently wishes them all good luck, though openly he tries to appease his pupil by assuring him that even if the whole world would be arrayed against him he would not mind it so long as his brain, which helped him to uproot the Nandas, is intact. Then he remarks to himself 'Now I have surely caught Rākṣasa like a wild elephant.'

ACT II

This act begins with the entrance of a spy of Rākṣasa under the disguise of a snake-charmer, who in the course of conversation speaks of his profession as being equal to that of a royal officer or a politician. Getting rid of a passer-by who had no access to Rākṣasa's dwelling, he declares that Cāṇakya and Rākṣasa, consummate politicians both of them, have by their policies made the Goddess of Wealth to waver.

Inside we see Rākṣasa seated and attended by a servant. He first reproaches Lakṣmī for being indiscriminate in deserting the Nandas for the worthless Maurya. He then declares his determination to take away her resort itself by killing Candragupta. Then he goes on to explain what steps he has taken upto now and with what end in view. While leaving Kusumapura, he has left his wife and children behind at Candanadāsa's place just to see that the efforts of his partisans are not slackened at the idea that Rākṣasa has deserted Kusumapura. Śakaṭadāsa is stationed in Kusumapura with a huge wealth for helping and encouraging the spies and partisans plotting against the life of Candragupta and getting secret information. Jīvasiddhi and others have been employed to cause a split in the enemy's camp and get his news every

moment. With this preparation Rākṣasa is quite sure that he would be able to avenge the destruction of the Nanda kings, provided fate is not against him.

Just at this moment comes the Kañcukī with a set of ornaments and a message from Malayaketu who has desired Rākṣasa to put them on. Rākṣasa, much against his will, does so only in due deference to the desire of Malayaketu ; and the Kañchukī goes away satisfied.

Then Rākṣasa asks his attendant to see if any one was waiting to see him ; and learns from him that a snake-charmer was there. Rākṣasa takes this as an ill omen ; and asks his man to send him away satisfied. The snake-charmer, however, insists that at least a short poem of his be taken to Rākṣasa, who on reading it understands its inner significance viz. that the snake-charmer is one of his spies who has gathered information from Kusumapura. After a little thinking he remembers that it was Virādhagupta ; and asks his attendant to bring him in, saying that as he appears to be a good poet he would like to listen to some of his poems.

As soon as Virādhagupta greets Rākṣasa, the latter suddenly addresses him by his real name, but immediately realizing his mistake turns the name into Virūḍhaśmaśru. Then dismissing all his attendants he asks him to take his seat. The latter also takes his seat and at the desire of the former commences his narration from the siege of Kusumapura by the enemies of Candragupta and Parvateśvara. This excites Rākṣasa who, soon realizing the situation, is only filled with grief at the remembrance of the great favour of the Nandas he had enjoyed. Virādhagupta proceeding tells how Sarvārthasiddhi left Kusumapura by a subterranean passage just to save his subjects from the great hardships inflicted on them by the siege, and how poor Parvateśvara was killed by the poison-maiden directed by him (i.e. Rākṣasa) to Candragupta.

This gives a rude shock to Rākṣasa ; but he soon recovers himself and asks Virādhagupta to proceed.

The latter then narrates how Malayaketu in fright deserted Kusumapura, how Vairocaka, the brother of Parvateśvara, was taken into confidence and installed a king along with Candragupta, and how Cāṇakya declaring that Candragupta would enter the palace of the Nandas at midnight ordered the carpenters to make suitable decorations. But Dāruvarman was rather too hasty and had already decorated the outer porch of the palace ; and Cāṇakya on knowing this only said that he would receive a proper reward for his diligence. Then Cāṇakya declared that Candragupta's entrance would take place exactly at mid-night and at the same time divided the whole kingdom between Candragupta and Vairocaka. Here Rākṣasa surmises that by thus dividing the kingdom Cāṇakya must already have arranged for the murder of Vairocaka, and at the same time has managed to wipe off the blame of the murder of Parvateśvara. Proceeding further, Virādhagupta tells that Cāṇakya made Vairochaka, all covered in garlands, seated on the female elephant of Candragupta, enter the palace of the Nandas. Naturally Dāruvarman mistook him for Candragupta and let the arch fall down. In the meanwhile Varvaraka, the driver of Vairocaka's elephant, tried to seize his scimitar which excited the elephant who now increased her speed and brought her driver just in time to die under the falling arch. Dāruvarman realized his miscarriage and with an iron bar killed Vairocaka mistaking him for Candragupta, and was himself pelted to death by the angry infantry. Rākṣasa, touched to the quick by this tale, asks him about Abhayadatta, the physician ; and is told how he also was detected by Cāṇakya and made to drink the poisoned medicine himself. He is again told how Pramodaka was suspected owing to his lavishness and was put to death ; and how Bībhaṭṣaka and the rest directed to assassinate Candragupta

in his bed-chamber were detected by the astute Cāṇakya and burnt alive by setting fire to the place where they lay concealed.

Rākṣasa is moved to tears by this long chain of sorrowful tales and declares that Candragupta has fate on his side, indeed. Virādhagupta suggests that it is not proper that Rākṣasa should give up what is once undertaken; and continuing his narration tells how Cāṇakya seized Rākṣasa's partisans as being the source of all mischief. Thus Jīvasiddhi has been banished with disgrace, on the charge that he murdered Parvateśvara with the poison-maiden under the direction of Rākṣasa. This evokes from Rākṣasa appreciation of Cāṇakya's policy. Śakaṭadāsa's turn came next; and he has been sentenced to be impaled on the charge that he instigated Dāruvarman and others to plot against Candragupta's life. This is a great shock to Rākṣasa; but composing himself he prepares himself to listen to the calamity of a third friend; and is told how Candanadāsa removed Rākṣasa's family to some safer place and refused to surrender the same even when Cāṇakya asked him to do so under severe threats. He is, therefore, thrown into prison with all his family. Hearing this Rākṣasa remarks, 'Better say that Rākṣasa himself is thrown into prison with his family.'

After this long chain of sorrowful events fortune seems for a while to smile on Rākṣasa and Śakaṭadāsa stands before him with Siddhārthaka who is introduced to him by the former as his rescuer. At once Rākṣasa presents him the ornaments from his own person. Siddhārthaka, however, seals them with the ring he has received from Cāṇakya and requests to be allowed to leave them with Rākṣasa only, as he has no acquaintance there. His request is readily granted. In the meanwhile Śakaṭadāsa notices that the ring bears the name of Rākṣasa who on knowing it asks Siddhārthaka how he got the ring. The latter told that he got it at the door of Can-

danadāsa on which Rākṣasa remarks 'Right'; and explains his remark to mean that there is nothing improbable in such a ring being found at the door of a merchant like Candana-dāsa. Then at the desire of Śakaṭadāsa, Siddhārthaka hands over the ring to Rākṣasa who in his turn hands it over to Śakaṭadāsa saying that he should use it in future in all his dealings. Now Siddhārthaka requests that since it is impossible for him to go back to Cāṇakya he should be allowed to remain in the service of Rākṣasa only. This request is only too gladly granted by Rākṣasa who then asks Śakaṭadāsa to look to the comfort of Siddhārthaka before they are off the stage.

Virādhagupta then informs Rākṣasa of the widening gulf between Candragupta and Cāṇakya since the escape of Malaya-
ketu. This news encourages Rākṣasa who now sends Virādhagupta to Kusumapura to ask Stavakalaśa, Candragupta's bard, to excite Candragupta's anger and send word to him through Karabhaka.

Just then a servant comes from Śakaṭadāsa with a set of three ornaments for sale. Rākṣasa very much likes it and at once sends word to Śakaṭadāsa that the set should be acquired by satisfying the demand of the merchant who has brought it. The servant goes away; and Rākṣasa, left to himself, expresses his hope—nay certainty—that there will be a split between Candragupta and Cāṇakya since both of them have now accomplished their purpose and no longer stand in need of each other.

ACT III

This act begins with the appearance of the Kañcukin on the stage conveying the order of king Candragupta to decorate the upper terrace of the Sugāṅga palace, so that he from there might witness the city celebrating the Kaumudī festival. Somebody asks him whether the prohibition of the festival

was not known to the king ; but the Kañcukin refuses to give any reply adding that it is none of their concern.

Then appears Candragupta with an attendant. In his soliloquy he says that kingship is indeed a source of great worry and that the goddess of wealth is indeed hard to propitiate. Then he informs the spectators that he had very reluctantly undertaken to conduct the affairs of the state independently of Cāṇakya for a while after picking a quarrel with him, according to his own desire. Reaching the Sugāṅga palace and going up there he is enchanted with the beauty of autumn ; but is at the same time struck to find no trace of the Kaumudī festival. He, therefore, asks the Kañcukin whether he had proclaimed his desire to the citizens, and if so, whether the people of Kusumpura don't care for his desire. The latter assures him that his desire or command would never be disobeyed in Kusumpura. It is only with great reluctance that he further informs him that the festival was prohibited by Cāṇakya. Candragupta thereon takes his seat and immediately sends for Cāṇakya.

Now Cāṇakya is seen in his abode thinking about Rākṣasa who, he declares, would better cease vying with him ; for the only point of similarity between them two is *vaira*. But he is sure that he can check Rākṣasa in no time. At this juncture the Kañcukin is seen outside the very simple abode of Cāṇakya. Entering there he tells Cāṇakya that he is invited by the king. Cāṇakya asks whether the king has heard of the prohibition of the festival ; and when the Kañcukin answers in the affirmative, he in pretended anger declares that it was the mischief played by the royal officers against him. On knowing that the king was in the Sugāṅga palace, Cāṇakya guided by the Kañcukin goes there and greets Candragupta who also falls at his feet. When they both are properly seated Cāṇakya asks why he was summoned ; and the latter desires to know why the festival was prohibited. Not that he wanted

to find fault with him, but that he was sure that Cāṇakya must have some purpose behind it ; and this was what he desires to know. But Cāṇakya points out that Candragupta was completely dependent on his minister in his administration and as such he should not enquire into such affairs. This rouses the anger of Candragupta ; and the bards also sing verses calculated to enhance his anger. Cāṇakya immediately sees through these verses the hand of Rākṣasa and remarks that he is quite vigilant himself. Candragupta, much pleased with the bards, orders that they be given a thousand gold coins. But Cāṇakya disallows such a gift and Candragupta bitterly complains that kingdom to him is nothing better than fetters. Cāṇakya retorts that such was the fate of those who were dependent on their ministers, and asks Candragupta to conduct the administration himself if he can. The latter accepts the challenge and asks Cāṇakya pertinently why he has prohibited the festival. Cāṇakya, however, asks why it was to be performed at all ; and when the king says that it was just to obey his order if for nothing else, Cāṇakya also declares that the prohibition also was just meant to violate the king's order and thereby prove his humility. That, however, is not the only purpose. Cāṇakya then asks the Kañcukin to fetch the documents concerning Bhadrabhaṭa and others ; who have deserted Candragupta and gone over to Malayaketu. When they are brought, Cāṇakya reads out the names of the persons thus absconded ; and Candragupta expresses his desire to know the causes of their disaffection. When the causes are told in detail, he asks why they were not checked and imprisoned ; and Cāṇakya assures him that it was not for want of ability, but because that was the right course to follow. For neither *anugraha* nor *nigraha* could be adopted in their cases without causing some trouble or another. Thus under the guidance of Rākṣasa and aided by Candragupta's own people Malayaketu is preparing to launch an attack against him. Time is,

therefore, ripe, concludes Cāṇakya, not for festivals, but for military exercise. That is why he has prohibited the Kaumudī festival even in contravention to the king's order.

This, however, does not satisfy Candragupta who now asks why Malayaketu was connived at while absconding from Kusumpura. Cāṇakya in reply points out that there was no other go ; for if he were captured that would have proved that they have treacherously killed Parvataka ; while giving away the promised half to him would render the murder of Parvataka a sheer treachery without any material advantage. But what about Rākṣasa ? asks Candragupta ; and Cāṇakya replies that staying within the capital he would have caused internal disturbances within ; and that even if he creates troubles outside, he can be very easily brought under effective control. To capture him per force was, of course, out of the question ; for in that attempt he would cause a large scale destruction of Candragupta's army or would perhaps be killed—neither of which consequences is desirable. Hearing all this argumentation on the part of Cāṇakya, Candragupta admits that it would never be possible for him to silence Cāṇakya by argumentation, and adds that after all he felt Rākṣasa to be more esteemable than him. Cāṇakya in anger asks what made him think so ; and Candragupta describes his achievements. But Cāṇakya in an ironical tone remarks that he thought that Rākṣasa has uprooted Candragupta and enthroned Malayaketu instead, like him. But Candragupta now is not willing to give Cāṇakya even that much credit and remarks that, all that was achieved by fate and not by him. And when the latter asserts that only fools believe in fate ; the former retorts that the wise also are far from prattling. This is more than what Cāṇakya can bear and in rage he shouts that Candragupta was only playing with fire and courting death. Candragupta thought that Cāṇakya was really angry ; but in a moment Cāṇakya curbs his feigned anger and lays

down the ministerial sword before Candragupta saying that it was no use discussing the matter any further. Then to himself he declares that this very plot of Rākṣasa he will utilise against him.

Cāṇakya leaves the place in anger and Candragupta asks the Kañcukin to proclaim the dismissal of Cāṇakya and the assumption of regal authority by himself. Kañcukin waits for a while ; and, when asked about it, says that he was thinking that Candragupta has now become a king, indeed. After he has gone Candragupta calls his attendant and desires to be shown the way to his bed-chamber as he had a bitter headache ; and while on the way he makes an open confession that he is extremely ashamed of what has happened and wonders how the heart of people does not break assunder with shame when they really disrespect their preceptor.

ACT IV

Act IV begins with Karabhaka going to the dwelling of Rākṣasa and asking the door-keeper to inform Rākṣasa of his arrival. The door-keeper asks him not to be very loud because Rākṣasa, suffering as he is from headache, is not yet out of bed.

Then we see Rākṣasa in his bed-room accompanied by Śakaṭadāsa, in a pensive mood, thinking of the great hardships that a minister like him is put to like a play-wright ! He is just thinking about *wicked Cāṇakya* when the door-keeper enters with the greeting '*Be Victorious*' ; and while he is thinking out the remaining portion of his thought viz., '*could be deceived*', the door-keeper is ready with the word '*Rākṣasa*'. This dramatic irony combined with the throbbing of the left eye forebodes evil for Rākṣasa, as he takes it. He would not, however, give up his efforts. The door-keeper announces the arrival of Karabhaka ; and Rākṣasa immediately calls him in. Karabhaka enters and takes his seat as directed by Rākṣasa who, however, does not remember on what mis-

sion exactly Karabhaka had been sent by him.

While Rākṣasa is thus trying to remember the mission entrusted to Karabhaka, on the other side of the stage is seen a servant warding off the people and making room for Malayaketu who is going to see Rākṣasa since he is suffering from headache.

Then appears on the stage Malayaketu accompanied by Bhāgurāyaṇa and Kañcukin. It is ten months since his father died ; and he has not yet performed the obsequies in his proud conviction that he would soon be avenging his death. Now he asks the Kañcukin to inform the accompanying princes that they should leave him alone, since he desires to see Rākṣasa alone. Then he asks the Kāñchukin and other attendants also to leave the place.

When he finds himself alone with Bhāgurāyaṇa, Malayaketu asks the latter what Bhadrabhaṭa and others meant when they told him that they wanted to remmain in his services not through Rākṣasa but through the commander, Śikharasena. Bhāgurāyaṇa tells him that they meant to say that Rākṣasa had enmity with Cāṇakya (and not Candragupta), so that it is not 'unlikely that if for some reason or the other Cāṇakya is dismissed, Rākṣasa may join Candragupta. In that case they would be losing Malayaketu's confidence if they have joined through Rākṣasa. But this risk they are not prepared to run. Malayaketu approves of this explanation and they both are about to enter the abode of Rākṣasa, when the latter remembers the mission on which Karabhaka had been sent and asks him whether he had seen Stavakalaśa in Kusumapura. When Malayaketu overhears this question put by Rākṣasa to Karabhaka he decides to wait outside and listen to the talk between them, thinking that their talk would not be quite open and frank if he is with them.

Then Rākṣasa asks Karabhaka whether his mission is successful and the latter answers in the affirmative. Malayaketu

is curious to know what the mission might be, but Bhāgurāyaṇa tells him that they would be able to know it by-the-bye in the course of the talk going on inside.

Now Rākṣasa expresses his desire to listen to the whole account at full length and Karabhaka tells that he at the command of Rākṣasa went to Pāṭaliputra and delivered his instructions to Stavakalaśa. In the meanwhile Candragupta had issued orders to celebrate the Kaumudī festival ; the people also were very eager to do so ; but Cāṇakya prohibited the same for reasons of his own. Stavakalaśa took this opportunity and sang songs calculated to excite Candragupta. Karabhaka recites those songs to Rākṣasa who is very highly pleased thereby and feels sure that this seed of dissension would soon bear its fruits. This remark of Rākṣasa, of course, strengthens Malayaketu's suspicions and he remarks '*Evam etat*'. Then Karabhaka proceeding tells how Candragupta praised Rākṣasa's qualities and dismissed Cāṇakya. Bhāgurāyaṇa impresses on the mind of Malayaketu the dismissal of Cāṇakya as an important gesture on the part of Candragupta. Now Rākṣasa asks Karabhaka whether there was any other cause which roused Candragupta's anger towards Cāṇakya. Bhāgurāyaṇa misrepresenting this to Malayaketu said that Rākṣasa wants to make sure that the gulf between Candragupta and Cāṇakya is rather too wide so that their re-union would be out of the question. Karabhaka tells that the other matter rousing Candragupta's anger was that Cāṇakya allowed Malayaketu and Rākṣasa to escape. Rākṣasa is now quite sure that Candragupta can very easily be conquered and says that Candragupta was now in his hands, and that soon Candanadāsa would be released and would be re-united with his wife and children. Malayaketu is rather doubtful about the first remark of Rākṣasa ; and Bhāgurāyaṇa tells him that Rākṣasa would not destroy Candragupta if dissociated from Cāṇakya. Rākṣasa then asks where Cāṇakya was ; and whether he has not gone

to a penance-grove or taken a vow again. Karabhaka in reply tells that there was a rumour to that effect. Rākṣasa then turns to Śakaṭadāsa and remarks that this does not appear probable; for Cāṇakya would never stand an insult at the hands of one whom he himself has created a king. Malayaketu here is interested in knowing why Rākṣasa is interested in Cāṇakya's repairing to the penance-grove or taking a vow; and is told by Bhāgurāyaṇa that it is evidently because Rākṣasa's purpose would be served to the extent to which Cāṇakya will be separated from Candragupta. Now Śakaṭadāsa tells Rākṣasa that it was but natural that Candragupta could not tolerate any violation of his orders and at the same time that Cāṇakya did not take a vow again as he is now quite conscious of the great hardship involved in the fulfilment thereof. Rākṣasa is convinced and asks Śakaṭadāsa to look to the comfort of Karabhaka.

When they are gone Rākṣasa expresses his desire to see Malayaketu; and the latter enters into his presence declaring that he himself has come to see him. After mutual greetings when they are seated Malayaketu enquires about Rākṣasa's headache and the latter replies that it won't subside unless and until the former becomes an *adhirāja*. Malayaketu expresses his confidence that it would take place very soon, and desires to know how long they would be required to wait before they get an opportunity to attack the enemy. Rākṣasa tells him that now there was no time to be lost and that he should at once lead an expedition against Candragupta, for a contingency has now befallen him. The contingency pertains to the minister and is a very serious one for Candragupta who is completely dependent on his minister. But Malayaketu thinks that people hate the arrogance of Cāṇakya; and his dismissal would please people whose loyalty to Candragupta would be all the deeper on that account. Rākṣasa, however, points out that what Malayaketu said applied to only such a section of

people as owe their rise to Candragupta. The rest of them, however, bear only a strong hatred for Candragupta as the extirpator of the Nanda race, so that they are sure to side with an enemy of Candragupta, particularly when they find him strong enough to defeat him. Has not Rākṣasa himself done it? Malayaketu now wants to know whether there is any other contingency facing the enemy; and is told that there was no need to think about any other contingency since the one pertaining to the minister is the most important, particularly for Candragupta who is so completely dependent on his minister that he won't be able to conduct the affairs of the state by himself or even by appointing any other minister in the place of Cāṇakya. Here Malayaketu feels glad that he is not so much dependent on his minister. But, Malayaketu adds, our success will be doubly ensured if Candragupta is confronted with more contingencies than one. Rākṣasa, however, puts forth all the strong points on his side and assures Malayaketu that their success was absolutely certain, and that it is for him only to desire for it. Malayaketu then declares that if that is so he would at once start the expedition; and leaves the stage along with Bhāgurāyaṇa.

Rākṣasa then asks his servant to see if any astrologer was available; and he is told that a Kṣapaṇaka was there. But as he was badly in need of one, he asks the servant to bring him in, but with a not inauspicious appearance. When the monk is brought in and had greeted Rākṣasa, the latter requests him to give him a day for starting an expedition. The monk gives the full-moon day as the best day from various astronomical considerations; and when Rākṣasa says that the *tithi* is not quite auspicious, the former points out that the *nakṣatra* and the *lagna* are four and twenty-four times respectively as powerful as the *tithi*. He further advises Rākṣasa to start his expedition on the support of the (favourable) Candra and derive great advantage. Rākṣasa, however, asks the monk

to consult other astrologers which he refuses to do, saying that Rākṣasa himself might do it if he likes; and when Rākṣasa asks him whether he was enraged, he answers that it was not he, but the god of Death, that was enraged with him. The monk then leaves the place; and Rākṣasa from his attendant knows that it was sunset, looking at which Rākṣasa observes that as a general rule servants desert a master fallen from glory.

PRAVEŚAKA IN ACT V

Siddhārthaka is seen with a letter and an ornament-casket both sealed with Rākṣasa's ring. The former was handed over to him by Cāṇakya, as we have already seen; and the latter, it may be remembered, is the one which Siddhārthaka himself had deposited with Rākṣasa under his seal. With these he now intends to go to Kusumapura. Seeing the monk in front of him he feels that it is an ill omen, but he does not avoid the monk since he wants to know from him whether the day is auspicious. The monk also rebukes him by remarking that he was enquiring after the nakṣatra after he had shaved himself. But Siddhārthaka tells him that if the day is not good he may even now cancel his programme for the day. Then the monk declares that in Malayaketu's camp conditions are not favourable for the time being, particularly because all movements to and from the camp are now restricted and none was allowed to go out or to come in without the *mudrā* of Bhāgurāyaṇa. Siddhārthaka tells the monk that he was Rākṣasa's man; but the latter at once remarks that even then he won't be allowed to leave the camp if he has not got the *mudrā* of Bhāgurāyaṇa. But Siddhārthaka requests the monk to say that he will be successful in his mission; and the latter also does accordingly and goes away to get Bhāgurāyaṇa's *mudrā* for himself.

ACT V

This act begins with Bhāgurāyaṇa ordering his attendant to bring to him any one that may be seeking to obtain *mudrā* from him. He also expresses regret that he should be required to deceive the affable Malayaketu. But he is helpless in this matter, he adds.

At this stage appears on the stage Malayaketu thinking to himself about Rākṣasa and his future action, and on knowing that Bhāgurāyaṇa was nearby giving *mudrās* to those who want to go out, he makes up his mind to play a joke with him. But as he is about to do so, Bhāgurāyaṇa's attendant brings in the monk seeking *mudrā*. Bhāgurāyaṇa recognizes him as a friend of Rākṣasa, Jīvasiddhi by name, and gives him the *mudrā* on making sure that he is not going on Rākṣasa's errand. The latter expresses great contempt for Rākṣasa and in reply to a query from Bhāgurāyaṇa declares, with great reluctance to all appearances, that previously Rākṣasa killed Parvateśwara through a poison-maiden, and he had to suffer for it; for he was banished by Cāṇakya with disgrace from Kusumapura as a friend of Rākṣasa. This gives a rude shock to Malayaketu who upto now was under the impression that Cāṇakya had killed his father. Bhāgurāyaṇa then asks what he had to say about the rumour that Cāṇakya had killed Parvateśvara to avoid giving him the promised half of the kingdom; and the latter asserts that it was all a lie. Now Bhāgurāyaṇa is satisfied and gives the *mudrā* to the monk. What he has heard is now certainly more than what Malayaketu could bear; and hence moving into the presence of Bhāgurāyaṇa he declares that what he has heard has doubly deepened his sorrow. The purpose of the monk, who is only a spy of Cāṇakya, is thus served and he goes away expressing his satisfaction at what has taken place.

Malayaketu now deeply affected declares that Rākṣasa is really a *rākṣasa* (a demon) in that he has proved treacherous to one who placed full confidence in him. This remark of Malayaketu roused Bhāgurāyaṇa's apprehensions and he told the former that it was not quite wrong on the part of Rākṣasa to kill Parvateśvara, who was then stronger than Candragupta himself; for, Rākṣasa then wanted to install Sarvārtha-siddhi on the throne. So it is better not to take him to task for the present and accept his services till the kingdom of the Nandas is obtained. Malayaketu approves of this suggestion of Bhāgurāyaṇa; for he thinks that the execution of a minister like Rākṣasa would lead to great commotion, thus making his victory doubtful.

Just at this stage Siddhārthaka is brought a captive before Malayaketu in an attempt to escape from the camp with a letter, but without *mudrā*. When it is revealed that he was in the service of Rākṣasa, Bhāgurāyaṇa asks him why he was thus going without *Mudrā*. Siddhārthaka replies that the importance of his mission brooked no delay; and Bhāgurāyaṇa desires to know what the mission is. At Malayaketu's command he also takes the letter from him and finding that it bore Rākṣasa's seal, opens it keeping the seal intact. It is found that the letter is only vaguely worded, though the following points are referred to in it. (i) The addressee has kept his word by dismissing the rival of the writer (i.e. Rākṣasa); (ii) he is requested to fulfil his promise to the friends of the writer and win their good-will; (iii) the addressee is reminded that some of them want the territory of the enemy and the rest desire to have his *kośa* and *hastibala*; (iv) he is also given an assurance that they will, in return, help him by destroying their resort i.e. Master; (v) the set of ornaments sent by the addressee is duly received and the writer also has sent some thing to accompany the letter with a request that it should be accepted by him; (vi) the oral message will be

delivered by the bearer of the letter, the most trusted Siddhārthaka.

After a good flogging Siddhārthaka drops from his arm-pit a casket of ornaments which is taken by the servant to Bhāgurāyaṇa. It also bears the seal of Rākṣasa; and when it is opened before Malayaketu, it is found to contain the ornaments which Malayaketu had presented to Rākṣasa on a previous occasion. Malayaketu is, therefore, convinced that the letter must be addressed to Candragupta. After a good flogging again Siddhārthaka agrees to tell the whole thing to Malayaketu himself, and requests to be excused in the matter. After an assurance to that effect from Malayaketu, Siddhārthaka tells that Rākṣasa has sent him with the letter to Candragupta and the oral message that the kings of the Kulūtas, Malaya, and Kāśmīra desire to have Malayaketu's territory, while those of Sindhu and Pārasīka desire to have his elephants and treasury, and that just as Candragupta had won his pleasure by dismissing Cāṇakya, similarly now he should win the pleasure of these princes by accomplishing their desire. This narration of Siddhārthaka is readily believed by Malayaketu who sees in it an explanation of the strong friendship which these kings had with Rākṣasa. He now sends for Rākṣasa.

Rākṣasa is seated in his house, full of concern at the idea that his army is mostly made up of deserters of Candragupta. But he satisfies himself by arguing that that should cause no anxiety, for these deserters were persons who had real disaffection for Candragupta and had accepted his own overtures before. Rākṣasa then sends Priyavrhadaka to tell the kings that it was now time for them to march in different directions according to the previously settled plan.

Just then the door-keeper informs Rākṣasa that Malayaketu desires to see him; and Rākṣasa, thinking that it would be improper on his part to go to Malayaketu without putting on

any ornament, sends word to Śakaṭadāsa to send one of the ornaments that he has bought for him. When the ornament is brought, Rākṣasa puts it on and starts for the camp of Malayaketu, thinking to himself how an officer, though above all guilt, always stands in great apprehension.

After mutual greetings Malayaketu tells Rākṣasa that he was rather ill at ease since he could not see him for a long time. On hearing from Rākṣasa that he was engaged in planning the counter-move, Malayaketu expresses his desire to know the plan of counter-action; and Rākṣasa gives out his plan as settled before. But Malayaketu is struck to find that the very kings who were reported to be plotting against him were to surround him according to Rākṣasa's plan. He, however, suppresses his misgivings and asks Rākṣasa if any one has come from or gone to Kusumapura. But when the latter asserts that now there was no need for doing so, for in a short while they themselves will be going there, Malayaketu's misgiving is confirmed and he asks why Rākṣasa has then sent Siddhārthaka with a letter. Being questioned by Rākṣasa, Siddhārthaka pretends to be ashamed and declares that being heavily flogged he found it impossible to keep the secret. Rākṣasa, on hearing this, is only confused and asks what secret he was referring to. But when he gave no reply to this, on Malayaketu's direction Bhāgurāyaṇa tells Rākṣasa that Siddhārthaka has stated that Rākṣasa himself has sent him with a letter and an oral message to Candragupta. Siddhārthaka confesses to have done so on heavy flogging, and Rākṣasa avers that it was all false and that a man when flogged may say any thing. Then is produced the letter, which also Rākṣasa declares to be only an enemy's trick. But what about the ornaments, asks Malayaketu, producing the ornaments recovered from Siddhārthaka. Rākṣasa recognizes these ornaments and tells that he has presented them to Siddhārthaka. But, Bhāgurāyaṇa remarks, it is very improper on Rākṣasa's part to give away to

Siddhārthaka the ornaments which Malayaketu had presented to him from his own person. Then Malayaketu refers to the oral message and Rākṣasa says that when the letter itself is not his, it is but evident that there can be no oral message either. It is further brought to the notice of Rākṣasa that the letter bore his seal. But he replied that it must be a counterfeit seal. Then Bhāgurāyaṇa turns to Siddhārthaka and asks him who has written the letter ; and under threats of being flogged again it was that Siddhārthaka revealed that it was written by Śakaṭadāsa. But Rākṣasa avers that a letter written by Śakaṭadāsa is as good as written by himself. Malayaketu desires to see Śakaṭadāsa himself in this connection ; but Bhāgurāyaṇa suggests that the matter could be settled by comparing the hand in the letter to that of Śakaṭadāsa. Śakaṭadāsa's writing and seal were, therefore, brought and it was found that the letter was in Śakaṭadāsa's hand, indeed. This confounds Rākṣasa who wonders whether Śakaṭadāsa has proved faithless. Then Malayaketu points to the ornament on the person of Rākṣasa and asks him whether that was one of those referred to in the letter. Looking at it more carefully, he recognizes it as belonging to his father and then asks from whom it was received. Rākṣasa tells that he has bought it ; but when he hears from Malayaketu that it belonged to his father, Rākṣasa declares that it was also a trap set by Cāṇakya. But Malayaketu now refuses to believe in Rākṣasa's word and a little later sarcastically remarks that there was truth in Rākṣasa's declaration and that the price for the ornament to be paid to Candragupta was his (Malayaketu's) very life. The evidence against Rākṣasa is so overwhelming that he now thinks it better to confess to the guilt than say anything else ; and when Malayaketu addresses him as *ārya*, Rākṣasa says that he was no longer an *ārya*. As regards the letter and the casket of ornaments Rākṣasa declares that it was only the working of fate. But Malayaketu is so much incensed

that he addresses Rākṣasa an *anārya* and tells him that it was all the working of avarice, and that he was treacherously handing him over to the enemy for getting his ministership, just as treacherously as he had killed the confiding Parvateśvara by a poison-maiden. Rākṣasa denies this latter charge and when Malayaketu makes a reference to Kṣapaṇaka Jīvasiddhi in this connection as a witness, Rākṣasa is simply astounded. Malayaketu now has not the least doubt about Rākṣasa's meanness in hatching plots against him and orders the several kings, his allies, to be put to death instantaneously, and allows Rākṣasa to go to Candragupta, adding that he is not mean-minded like him. He also declares that he is strong enough to defeat all the enemies single-handed. At Bhāgurāyaṇa's suggestion Malayaketu leaves the place to start his expedition against Kusumapura; and Rākṣasa, now left alone, laments that all his plans should only result in the destruction of his own friends rather than that of his enemies. 'What to do next?' is the most important question; and after some thought he decides to try to release Candanadāsa from the clutches of Cāṇakya, and leaves the place.

PRAVEŚAKA IN ACT VI

Siddhārthaka sees his friend Samiddhārthaka and at his request tells him that Malayaketu has banished Rākṣasa and killed Citravarman and others; and that Malayaketu himself is captured by Bhadrabhaṭa and others. Then the whole of the Mleccha army has been captured by Cāṇakya. Samiddhārthaka asks whether Cāṇakya has again resumed his duties as Candragupta's minister. Siddhārthaka, however, simply tells that even Rākṣasa himself is unable to fathom the policy of Cāṇakya. He further tells him that Rākṣasa has now come to Pāṭaliputra, as is reported by a spy, Udumbara. Siddhārthaka conjectures that he has come here for the sake of Candanadāsa who, however, according to Cāṇakya's order is to be executed.

by them both under the disguise of Cāṇḍālas. Samiddhārthaka resents this order, but Siddhārthaka tells him that none who wants to remain alive dare violate the order of Cāṇakya. So they both decide to take up the garb of Cāṇḍālas : and lead Candanadāsa to the place of execution.

ACT VI

A man with a rope in hand tells us that he has come to the place where he has been directed by Cāṇakya to see Rākṣasa. Looking about him he finds Rākṣasa nearby, his face veiled and coming up towards him. He, therefore, conceals himself behind the trees there and keeps a watch on Rākṣasa.

Rākṣasa then enters voicing his charges against the Goddess of Wealth and at the same time adding that it is fate, and not the Brāhmaṇa, that is the real enemy of the Nanda race. He even blames Malayaketu for being so blind and indiscriminate. But he would prefer to die rather than make peace with Candragupta. Then he looks about him and enters the *jīṇodyāna* with a view to get some news about his friend, Candanadāsa. Mourning for a while about the sharp contrast of his present condition with that in the past he sits on a slab of stone. While seated there he hears a sound of trumpets mixed with that of drums and conches, and infers that it was the rejoicings of the enemy at the capture of Malayaketu.

The man seeing Rākṣasa seated there, hangs himself just in front of him in obedience to the instructions of Cāṇakya. On seeing this Rākṣasa enquires about the whole matter and in a series of questions and answers comes to know that the man was hanging himself just to avoid hearing the news of the death of his friend Viṣṇudāsa, who was going to burn himself alive before he heard of the execution of his dear friend, Candanadāsa. The man also tells how Candanadāsa incurred the wrath of Cāṇakya by refusing to surrender the wife and children of Rākṣasa, and how Cāṇakya refused to deliver

him for any amount whatever. Rākṣasa in great concern wants to know that Candanadāsa is not yet executed ; and learns that he is to be executed just that day. Rākṣasa is very deeply touched by the magnanimity of Candanadāsa and asks the man to prevent Viṣṇudāsa from burning himself since he would save Candanadāsa with his sword. But the man on knowing that he was Rākṣasa himself, tells him courteously that such an attempt on his part would only hasten Candanadāsa's execution. For since Śakaṭadāsa's absconding led to the execution of the executioners themselves, the executioners, whenever they notice any armed person nearby, immediately execute the culprit just for their own lives if for nothing else. Rākṣasa is here thrown into great confusion, but ultimately concludes that he would offer himself as ransom to release his friend Candanadāsa.

ACT VII

This act begins with one cāṇḍāla appearing on the stage and declaring the deadly consequences of *rājāpathya* and pointing to the case of Candanadāsa as an illustration.

Then comes Candanadāsa lamenting that he should meet with an end befitting a thief. He is also grieved at the idea that even friends like Viṣṇudāsa should desert him at this stage ; and that others who have not done so should do nothing better than look at him with tearful eyes. When they are at the place of execution, the Cāṇḍāla requests Candanadāsa to bid farewell to the members of his family. Candanadāsa asks his wife to return with her son ; but with tears in her eyes she declines to do so, since he was going to the other world. Candanadāsa tries to cheer her up by saying that he is dying for a friend. But she affirms that she would follow him in his death. He again reminds her of her son for whom at least she must live ; but she is prepared to leave her son to the care of the household deities and asks him to bow to his

father for the last time. The son doing so asks what he should do, bereft of his father; and Candanadāsa very frankly tells him, 'Stay in a place where Cāṇakya has no sway'.

In the meanwhile the stake is erected and the Cāṇḍālas ask Candanadāsa to be ready. At this Candanadāsa's wife raises a cry for help and Candanadāsa tries to appease her by pointing out that since he was dying for a friend and not for any personal crime she should rather smile than weep. The second Cāṇḍāla now grows rather impatient and asks his fellow-brother to seize Candanadāsa so that his wife and son would return of their own accord. As the Cāṇḍāla is about to catch hold of him, Candanadāsa asks him to wait a bit, and embracing his son tells him again that he was meeting his end in a friend's cause; and the son also remarks that it was but their *kula-dharma*. Then the Cāṇḍālas seize Candanadāsa and his wife begins to weep piteously and cry for help.

Rākṣasa hastily appears on the stage and in an assuring tone requests Candanadāsa's wife to be calm, and asks the Cāṇḍālas not to execute Candanadāsa. He asks them to place the culprit's garland on his own neck. Candanadāsa with tears in his eyes asks Rākṣasa what he has done; and the latter replies that he has only partially imitated his good deed. But Candanadāsa repeats his question pointing out that this action on the part of Rākṣasa has frustrated all his endeavours. But Rākṣasa again declares that he has acted only in self-interest; and asks the Cāṇḍālas to inform Cāṇakya that Rākṣasa is captured. The Cāṇḍāla requests somebody there to take to Cāṇakya, the thunderbolt of the mountain of the Nanda race, the founder of the Maurya race, the news that minister Rākṣasa is captured and that his policies and talent are circumscribed by the former's policy.

Here Cāṇakya's face is seen, his body screened behind the

curtain. He asks who has achieved all the difficult tasks and when the Cāṇḍāla attributes the achievements to him, he declines to take any credit to himself and plainly attributes it to the misfortune of the Nandas. Rākṣasa also appreciates the magnanimity of Cāṇakya here ; and he also shows his appreciation of the qualities of the former as a politician. Then Cāṇakya tosses aside the curtain and pays homage to Rākṣasa. Now comes the denouement and Cāṇakya reveals to Rākṣasa that the two Cāṇḍālas were none but Siddhārthaka and Samiddhārthaka, his spies ; and that Śakaṭadāsa was made to write that mischievous letter without being aware that he was doing it. Every thing including the letter, the set of ornaments, the monk, the man in the *jīṇodyāna*, even Bhadrabhaṭa and others and lastly the imprisonment of Candanadāsa—all that was nothing but a trap laid by him, reveals Cāṇakya, to win over Rākṣasa to Candragupta.

Candragupta, arriving there, bows down to Cāṇakya who asks him to bow to Rākṣasa, the premier. Candragupta does accordingly and Rākṣasa also greets him in return. Then Cāṇakya asks Rākṣasa whether he really desires to save the life of his friend ; and tells him that if he really did it, he can do it only on the condition that he agrees to be the minister of Candragupta. Rākṣasa pleads his incompetence to wield a position so ably held by no less a person than Cāṇakya himself. But the latter warns Rākṣasa that there was no other way of saving Candanadāsa's life. Rākṣasa, therefore, accepts the condition. In the meanwhile Malayaketu is brought a captive ; but Cāṇakya now points to Rākṣasa who, of course, suggests that Malayaketu should be set free. Cāṇakya thereon declares that Candragupta is pleased to restore to Malayaketu his paternal territory ; and asks Bhadrabhaṭa and others to see that he is properly reinstated. Candanadāsa is raised to the position of *sarva-nagara-śreṣṭhin*, and all prisoners are set free. Cāṇakya then ties his hair and asks Candragupta and

Rākṣasa what other favour they would like to have from him ; and Candragupta expresses his complete satisfaction at what has happened, while Rākṣasa only adds that the ruling king Candragupta might rule long.

CHAPTER III

A CRITICAL APPRECIATION

PROLOGUE

Like every other Sanskrit play the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* also begins with a *nāndī* and a prologue. According to Sanskrit canon a *nāndī*¹ consists of a verse or two purporting to invoke a blessing from and offer obeisance to some deity and to suggest the main idea of the plot, of course, only indirectly. It is so called because it is believed that deities take delight in it. The *nāndī* of our play comprises two verses in the *srag-dharā* metre describing the *śāthya* and the *tāṇḍava nṛtya* of God Śiva (*vibhu* and *tripuravijayin*) respectively and invoke his blessings. The *śāthya* of God Śiva very well suggests the *śāthya* (i.e. the crooked policy) of the all powerful *Cāṇakya*. Similarly the various limitations set by *Cāṇakya* to himself in the accomplishment of his task and also the difficulty thereof is clearly reflected in the *tāṇḍava nṛtya* of God Śiva who is represented in the second stanza as performing it under various limitations caused by the local conditions. The end of the play also seems to be suggested by these stanzas by representing the *śāthya* as getting the upper hand and also by the epithet *tripuravijayī* as applied to God Śiva.

Technically prologue is the name given to the introductory portion of every Sanskrit play. According to the definition² a prologue consists of a striking conversation between the *Sūtradhāra* on the one hand and the *naṭī*, or the *vidūṣaka*, or the *pāripārśvaka* on the other, concerning some pertinent matter but at the same time suggestive of the plot of the play to some extent. The prologue may be said to serve more

purposes than one. Thus it introduces the author and also his play by giving their names and some more information regarding the pedigree of the author. It also rouses the interest of the spectators and captures their attention by introducing music or by some such device and ultimately very cleverly leads on to the plot itself. Besides all this it also gives the shrewd audience an inkling of some incidents of the plot itself. The prologue of our play will be found to be quite upto the mark in every respect. It not only supplies us with some information regarding the author and his pedigree and also the name of the play, but at the same time rouses our interest by the promise of music which, of course, is superseded by the more interesting scene of a large number of ladies very busily engaged in various preparations. The interest thus roused is sustained by the mention of the rumour about the moon-eclipse in a stanza³ with *double entendre* which is utilized for introducing the main character on the stage, thus making the beginning of the play proper. We thus see that the prologue in a lucid conversation rouses the interest and captivates the attention of the spectators and introduces to them the poet and his play.

Brevity is another good point to be noted about the prologue of our play. It is but natural that the spectators should go impatient if the poet, forgetting the limits of a prologue, introduces in it a number of impertinent and irrelevant matters and makes it unnecessarily lengthy. In fact it is the business of every playwright to see that his prologue is short and to the point. Happily enough Viśākhadatta has shown his sense of propriety by scrupulously avoiding in his prologue the introduction of any such matter and thus making it short and sweet.

Even a casual reader of the *Mudrā-rākṣasa* will hardly fail to notice the influence of the *Mṛcchakaṭika* and the *Cāru-datta* on Viśākhadatta. As in those plays so also here we see

how the Sūtradhāra, turning homeward after music, finds preparations being made and eagerly asks what the occasion was. Viśākhadatta has, however, studiously avoided the temptation to copy all the humour which Śūdraka and Bhāsa have created out of the situation. That would not only have made his prologue too lengthy but would at the same time have marred the seriousness of the atmosphere which was so absolutely essential for the appearance of the enraged Cāṇakya on the stage.

According to writers on dramaturgy Prastāvanā is of five different kinds.⁴ Very often it is more difficult than otherwise to say definitely to which of these five varieties a particular prastāvanā belongs. Thus the prastāvanā of our play has been said to be of the prayogātīśaya⁵ kind. According to others it is of the kathodghāta⁶ type because we find therein Cāṇakya appearing on the stage, taking his cue from the words of the Sūtradhāra. Nor are champions of avalagita⁷ and the pravartaka⁷ types wanting. But we may, on the authority of Viśvanātha,⁸ put it down as belonging to the udghātyaka variety inasmuch as therein we see Cāṇakya interpreting the words of the Sūtradhāra in his own way and thus coming on the stage.

The prastāvanā may also be found to be suggestive. The Sūtradhāra turning homewards finds the women-folk extremely busy in several ways. This suggests how the two ministers with all their team of spies are extremely busy with their plans and counter-plans. St. 5⁹ where the Sūtradhāra calls his wife nītividyā may be said to suggest the dominance of political intrigue in the play : while the sixth¹⁰ stanza with its *double entendre* is clearly indicative of the main plot of the play in general viz. that Rākṣasa allied with Malayaketu is trying to overpower per force Candragupta now at the height of prosperity ; but that the latter's conjunction with the shrewd Cāṇakya foils all the plans of Rākṣasa and thus Candragupta is saved.

ACT I

The Mudrā-rākṣasa holds a unique position in the whole of Sanskrit dramatic literature in having a mainly political theme. It begins in an atmosphere befitting the seriousness of the plot ; and the spectator is at once taken into the very heart of the plot when Cāṇakya in his monologue acquaints him with his recent achievement, his further aim, and the various means that he has devised for its achievement.

Viśākhadatta has very cleverly given the spectator an idea of the situation by making Cāṇakya express his concern at the spreading of the report of the alliance of Rākṣasa with Malayaketu against Candragupta ; and further making him boast of his past achievement viz., the extermination of the Nandas and the establishment of Candragupta on the throne, which ultimately leads him to declare his main and immediate aim hereafter viz., the winning over of Rākṣasa into the service of Candragupta, particularly because he is possessed of prajñā, vikrama and bhakti together. This naturally leads Cāṇakya to declare what measures he has taken to achieve this aim of his. On coming to know the various measures taken by Cāṇakya, the spectator is sure to be struck with the political acumen of Cāṇakya. This monologue of Cāṇakya is thus very important as testifying to the skill shown by Viśākhadatta in making the spectator acquainted with various circumstances, which form the back-ground of the plot of his play. He has also very cleverly brought out some of the salient features of the character of Cāṇakya such as his political acumen, his self-confidence, his wrathful nature, and also his appreciative nature even towards his enemies.

While Cāṇakya is thus indulging in his monologue inside his house, we see a spy standing outside at his door and seeking entrance. The conversation between the spy and Cāṇakya's pupil is a specimen of fine humour and serves as a sort of foil

for the serious monologue that has preceded and the dialogue, concerning serious matters again, that is to follow. It is by the use of contrast and such other devices that Viśākhadatta has succeeded in sustaining the interest of his spectators. Even humour, however, is not allowed to transgress its proper limits and is brought to an end by Cāṇakya overhearing the conversation outside, particularly the last portion thereof, and asking the spy to enter. Here again has Viśākhadatta very cleverly shown Cāṇakya's alertness and sharp memory by making him remember immediately the name of the spy and the duty that he had entrusted to him. This presents a good contrast to the character of Rākṣasa as we shall see later on.

Next comes the narration of various important matters by the spy. In a dramatic composition, long narration is rather unnatural; and hence Viśākhadatta has cleverly made Cāṇakya pass various remarks at various intervals. These remarks of Cāṇakya thus serve a double purpose; for besides breaking the monotony of the narration, they reveal certain traits of Cāṇakya's character and also his working. Thus we see how Cāṇakya has managed his spies with such care that they do not know one another.¹¹ Cāṇakya's alertness and also his self-confidence become evident from his remark about the kāyastha Śakaṭadāsa.¹² But his remark when he receives Rākṣasa's seal ring from his spy, clearly shows how Cāṇakya can in no time look into the future and very accurately too.¹³ The last remark¹⁴ of Cāṇakya, when he allows his spy to go, shows that he was far from being sentimental. It may be observed how Viśākhadatta has very cleverly introduced the ring—the ring that has given its name to the play at least partially—very innocently and roused the interest of the spectator as to how it would be used by Cāṇakya for winning over Rākṣasa. This interest is further heightened when Cāṇakya orders his pupil to bring ink and paper and declares that he would now write a letter by which Rākṣasa is sure to be won over.

The entrance of the pratīharī just at this juncture with a request from Candragupta to be allowed to perform the obsequies of Parvateśvara and give away his ornaments to Brāhmaṇas, and the reply given to it by Cāṇakya bear ample testimony to Viśākhadatta's dramatic skill and sense of economy. For this incident supplies Cāṇakya with material for the latter part of his letter, and he very soon hits upon the material for the earlier part also after a little thought. Shrewd as he is, Cāṇakya almost on the spur of the moment decides to leave the wording of his letter only vague.¹⁵ Quickness of judgment possessed by Cāṇakya is also seen when he immediately sends his pupil with proper instructions to Siddhārthaka to get the letter written by Śakaṭadāsa (of course with a very plausible excuse¹⁶) and see him with it. When Siddhārthaka comes with the letter in the hand of Śakaṭadāsa, Cāṇakya passes an appreciative remark about the hand of Śakaṭadāsa, and gets it sealed with the ring of Rākṣasa which he has recently secured. He also gives Siddhārthaka detailed instructions as to how he is to run away with Śakaṭadāsa after setting him free from the impaling station, and receiving a present from Rākṣasa for having saved his dear friend, serve him only for some time. Cāṇakya then whispers something into the ear of Siddhārthaka to tell him what he is to do when the enemy is near the capital. This is sure to rouse the curiosity of the spectator which, however, is not to be satisfied until almost the end of the drama. Before Siddhārthaka leaves the stage, Cāṇakya sends orders through his pupil (of course, on behalf of Candragupta) to banish Jīvasiddhi with disgrace for having murdered Parvataka with a poison-maiden, and to impale Śakaṭadāsa and imprison his relatives. The pupil goes away and Cāṇakya is thinking whether his plan would succeed when Siddhārthaka asks permission to leave; and Cāṇakya allows him to go after handing over to him the letter and the seal ring.¹⁷ Here we see how Siddhārthaka is made to remain idle

on the stage for some time while Cāṇakya is sending away his pupil with proper instructions. Viśākhadatta is here guilty of being undramatic simply owing to his craze for the *patākāsthāna* of which we have in this play several instances. The importance of this order sent through his pupil by Cāṇakya can be realized only when we see how it is utilized to give a threat to Candanadāsa only a few minutes later. But when Cāṇakya asks himself whether after all this Rākṣasa would be captured, our curiosity is roused as to how these events would be utilized by Cāṇakya in fulfilling his aim.

Having thus dealt with two of the three adversaries mentioned by the spy, Cāṇakya now turns his attention to the third and asks his pupil to fetch him. Now Candanadāsa and Cāṇakya's pupil are seen on the road near the house of Cāṇakya. In his very first remark Candanadāsa reveals his view about Cāṇakya (and his view is right) and also his shrewdness by appraising the situation and quickly arranging for the removal of Rākṣasa's family from his abode. This scene between Cāṇakya and Candanadāsa is very interesting indeed, displaying as it does Cāṇakya's cleverness in the art of eliciting information from others and also in the art of questioning, and his sternness, on the one hand and Candanadāsa's simplicity coupled with a staunchness of friendship and purpose, nay his extra-ordinary boldness and fearlessness in the cause of a friend, on the other. In the course of conversation Candanadāsa once declares that the charge that he was hiding Rākṣasa's family in his house was all baseless but later on falling a victim to Cāṇakya's remark, says that Rākṣasa's family was with him sometime before. Cāṇakya at once catches him at this and orders him forthwith to surrender the family of Rākṣasa. Just at this moment a noise is heard outside on the road, not once but twice; and Cāṇakya each time orders his pupil to see what it was all about, though he knows full well that the noise was caused by the fact that Jīvasiddhi was being

banished with disgrace and that Śakaṭadāsa was being led to the impaling station. The news brought in by the pupil is utilised by Cāṇakya for threatening Candanadāsa with severe punishment for being unfriendly towards Candragupta like the two offenders who were now being punished and thus inducing him to save himself and his family by surrendering the family of Rākṣasa.¹⁸ This threat on the part of Cāṇakya, however, calls forth a boldness from Candanadāsa who in very definite terms strongly refuses to surrender Rākṣasa's family.¹⁹ At the end of this scene Cāṇakya tells us how this would result in the capture of Rākṣasa.²⁰ But certain matters have been introduced in this Act (e.g. the letter and the ring) and the spectator would like to know how they would be utilised by Cāṇakya in achieving his object. This, of course, would be clear as the play advances. In this Act, however, Viśākhadatta has given us the main point of the play and also the main device by which it is going to be achieved.

The Act ends with pieces of news which are apparently rather disconcerting to Cāṇakya, but which in fact are the sign of Cāṇakya's plot being on its wheels, and form the logical outcome of what has preceded.

Thus we see that Act I may fall into various scenes economically and logically well arranged so as to give the spectator a good idea of the main aim of Cāṇakya and the main device by which he would have it fulfilled. It, at the same time, brings out the salient traits of the characters of Cāṇakya and Candanadāsa; and by giving out certain details helps to rouse and sustain the interest of the spectator. The element of contrast also has been properly used and no speech therein is allowed to be undramatically lengthy. The end of the Act also is highly dramatic, indeed, because when, on knowing from the pupil about the absconding of a large number of his people Cāṇakya dramatically²¹ tells Rākṣasa that he now can't escape from his clutches, the spectator wonders that Cāṇakya

would do further and how the absconding of all these persons would be utilised in capturing Rākṣasa.

ACT II

Act II in many respects presents a striking parallel to Act I. The scene is laid in the house of Rākṣasa and the adjoining road. A spy of Rākṣasa under the disguise of a snake-charmer is seen on the road, approaching the house of Rākṣasa. Then in a soliloquy he tells us how he is struċk by the political acumen of both Cāṇakya as well as Rākṣasa; and declares that he would now see Rākṣasa.

Inside the house just at this stage, is seen Rākṣasa indulging in a soliloquy, bearing testimony to his sentimentality. It may easily be observed that whereas Rākṣasa very often lapses into poetry Cāṇakya very rarely does so. It is just in keeping with his character that Rākṣasa severely upbraids Lakṣmī²² and avows that he would soon deprive her of her very resort (by killing Candragupta).²³ This naturally leads him to state what he has done to achieve his end; and from this statement we see how Rākṣasa also is not an ordinary politician. One, however, wonders how he is deceived into taking Jīvasiddhi (a fast friend and spy of Cāṇakya) as his best friend and spy.²⁴ The reference to fate²⁵ in the end of his soliloquy again helps us to contrast him with Cāṇakya who is ever full of self-confidence.

Then comes in Kañcukin bringing a gift of ornaments to Rākṣasa from Malayaketu. Rākṣasa, though unwilling to do so, puts them on at the request of the Kañcukin who thereon goes away satisfied. This short scene shows how Rākṣasa is considerate and rather soft at heart. It also shows Rākṣasa's deep devotion to his former masters—a quality which had evoked unstinted praise²⁶ from no less a person than Cāṇakya.

Then follows a section corresponding to the conversation between the spy and the pupil after Cāṇakya's monologue in

Act I. This section, like the corresponding section in Act I, serves to bring out the contrast between Cāṇakya on the one hand and Rākṣasa on the other. We see here Rākṣasa committing some blunders. Thus he first declares that he does not want to see the serpents' play ;²⁷ but that he would listen to the kāvya from the snake-charmer since he appears to be a good Prakrit poet also.²⁸ But when actually the spy is ushered into his presence, he asks his servants to go away saying that he would divert himself with snakes.²⁹ Again Rākṣasa's inferiority to Cāṇakya is apparent when we see him remarking that he has forgotten³⁰ that the snake-charmer was his own spy whom he had sent to gather information from Kusumapura ; and also when in the presence of his servants he calls his spy by his real name.³¹ It is thus clear that Rākṣasa, though a great politician, is yet inferior to his rival Cāṇakya ; and more sentimental and soft-hearted than he. Rākṣasa's resourcefulness, however, is evident from the way in which he turns *vrādhā* into *Virūḍha-śmaśru*.

Corresponding to the scene containing the spy's narration in Act I we have here a scene where the snake-charmer narrates several events showing how the several plans devised by Rākṣasa to kill Candragupta were frustrated and resulted in the destruction of several of his trusted friends and help-mates. Like the narration in Act I here also we find the narration of Virādhagupta interrupted by several remarks of Rākṣasa, revealing several traits of his character. Thus in the very beginning when the spy begins by telling how the city was besieged, Rākṣasa is at once all fury and orders his men to march.³² This only shows the sentimentality of Rākṣasa. On being reminded, however, that it was all a matter of the past, Rākṣasa's sentimentality again breaks out into his remembrance of the special favour of the Nandas he had been enjoying.³³ Rākṣasa is again struck to hear that the poison-maiden sent by him to kill Candragupta was utilised by

Cāṇakya to kill Parvateśvara and compares this incident with a similar incident in the *Mahā-bhārata*.³⁴ As Virādhagupta proceeding tells how Dāruvarman had rather hastily erected the outer porch in anticipation of Cāṇakya's orders and how Cāṇakya merely remarked that he would soon receive a good reward befitting his diligence, Rākṣasa at once reads the situation and rightly remarks that the attempt of Dāruvarman must have miscarried or even resulted in something evil.³⁵ This clearly shows that Rākṣasa was possessed of a keen insight and deep intelligence. For Dāruvarman's plan, far from being successful, had actually resulted in his own death and also that of Vairocaka and Varvaraka. When Virādhagupta further tells how Cāṇakya crowned Vairocaka along with Candragupta not only promising but also actually giving him half of the kingdom, Rākṣasa at once sees how before doing so Cāṇakya must have already planned to bring about his murder by some other means and how all this show was only meant to wipe off the ignominy arising out of the murder of Parvataka.³⁶ On going through all this scene between Virādhagupta and Rākṣasa one can't help being struck at the far-reaching plots that Rākṣasa had hatched and how he had tried to capture the very abode of Candragupta. This sad tale of the failure of all his plans ultimately evokes from Rākṣasa again his belief in fate³⁷ which only serves to show that he is inferior to Cāṇakya and also to win our sympathies for him. This naturally leads to the second instalment of the unpalatable pieces of news viz. the banishment of Jīvasiddhi with disgrace from Kusumapura, the impalement of Śakaṭadāsa, and the imprisonment of Candanadāsa. The remarks of Rākṣasa in connection with each one of these clearly show his appreciative nature (even as regards his enemies),³⁸ his sense of devotion to his masters and their cause,³⁹ and his sincerity of friendship.⁴⁰

This chain of dismal tales is now happily interrupted to the

extreme relief of the spectator whose patience is upto now sufficiently tried ; and there is some bright news for Rākṣasa about the safe arrival of Śakaṭadāsa with Siddhārthaka, his rescuer. This, of course, rouses the curiosity of the spectator who is now reminded of the instructions that Cāṇakya had given to Siddhārthaka. The spectator is, therefore, naturally interested in observing how Siddhārthaka proceeds. Rākṣasa, on coming to know from his friend that Siddhārthaka was responsible for his rescue from the jaws of death, is highly pleased with him and bestows on him the ornaments that he had on his person at the moment. These, it may be remembered, are the very ornaments which were sent by Malayaketu to Rākṣasa in the beginning of this Act. These ornaments, innocently introduced as they are in this Act, are very cleverly utilized by Viśākhadatta later on. This incident also is in accordance with the sentimentality which, as we have already seen above, is a trait of Rākṣasa's character. The cleverness of Siddhārthaka is clear when we find him with a plausible excuse requesting Rākṣasa to allow him to deposit the ornaments with him under his own seal and again readily handing over the seal ring to Rākṣasa, who in his turn hands it over to Śakaṭadāsa for using it in all future transactions. This seal is, of course, the same that is introduced in Act I. In obedience to Cāṇakya's instructions,⁴¹ Siddhārthaka also requests to be admitted into Rākṣasa's service since it was now impossible for him to go back to Kusumapura after what he has done.

All this while Virādhagupta is kept idle on the stage which can be said to be a defect in Viśākhadatta's workmanship. After the exit of Śakaṭadāsa with Siddhārthaka, Virādhagupta tells Rākṣasa of the widening gulf between Cāṇakya and Candragupta. Being rather encouraged by this information Rākṣasa at once asks Virādhagupta to go back to Kusumapura and instruct his spy Stavakalaśa (serving Candragupta as his

bard) to excite Candragupta by suitable verses and inform him accordingly through Karabhaka.

Soon after Virādhagupta leaves, a man comes with ornaments and a word from Śakaṭadāsa that the ornaments are for sale and that he should like to know whether he should buy them for him. The dramatic importance of this incident would be clear when later on we shall see how these very ornaments (and these are the ornaments of Parvateśvara given away by Candragupta to Viśvāvasu and his brothers in Act I) are used to show Malayaketu that Rākṣasa has been secretly allying himself with Candragupta and plotting against his life.⁴²

This Act ends with Rākṣasa expressing his confidence that the two viz. Cāṇakya and Candragupta will fall out with one another because they both have accomplished their purpose.⁴³

In Act II thus we see how the mudrā is made to pass from Siddhārthaka to Śakaṭadāsa through Rākṣasa ; how the ornaments are made to go from Malayaketu to Rākṣasa, and from him to Siddhārthaka, who deposits them with Rākṣasa himself for the time being ; and also how the ornaments of Parvateśvara are made to pass from Candragupta to Viśvāvasu and his brother in Act I and thence to Śakaṭadāsa for Rākṣasa. This act also reveals the sentimental nature, political wisdom, tenderness of heart, staunchness of friendship, and such other qualities of Rākṣasa as also his blundering nature. Act II presents an exact parallel to Act I in this that while Act I reveals the plots and plans and the salient features of the character of Cāṇakya, Act II does the same in the case of Rākṣasa. Even from the point of view of construction the parallelism between these two Acts is only too evident from the beginning to the end.

ACT III .

Garbhāṅka is not a very usual phenomenon in Sanskrit drama ; and the earliest writer known to have used it so far

is Śrī-harṣa.⁴⁴ Act III of the Mudrā-rākṣasa may be fittingly described as a precursor of this device. The whole of the Act is nothing but a sort of drama in which Candragupta and Cāṇakya play the main roles. The scene is laid in this Act for the most part in the Sugāṅga palace in Kusumapura and the road adjoining it. The incident in the Act apparently is the logical sequence of the plan of Rākṣasa ; though, in fact, it is nothing but a strategy used by Cāṇakya to outwit Rākṣasa.

The Act begins with the appearance of the kañcukin on the stage and indulging in what is technically called *ākāśabhāṣita*.⁴⁵ This is the device used by Viśākhadatta to make the spectator acquainted with certain circumstances which he must know before he can follow the events in the Act. Generally this purpose is served by what is known as the *interlude* (*praveśaka* or *Viṣkambhaka*). But Viśākhadatta has simplified matters by using only a sort of monologue instead. From this monologue we know that king Candragupta wants to see the city celebrating the kaumudī-mahotsava in obedience to his orders, but finds that the citizens are not celebrating it since it is prohibited by somebody and that too without his knowledge.

Here Candragupta is introduced to the spectator declaring how it is the lot of the king to be always ill at ease,⁴⁶ how this feeling of uneasiness waxes strong at the idea of Lakṣmī being insatiable indeed ;⁴⁷ and lastly how for him in particular the worse has come to worst since his preceptor has asked him to pick up a sham quarrel with himself and conduct the affairs of the state by himself for some time—something which he looks upon as a grave sin.⁴⁸ On a second thought, however, he feels that he has even before been independent in the administration ; for he was always free to do the right, and was checked by his preceptor only when he was going wrong.⁴⁹ This soliloquy of Candragupta serves a double purpose by giving us some of the salient features of the character of Candragupta viz. his sentimentality, devotion to and implicit

faith in his preceptor, and also his sensibility and humility ; and at the same time preparing us for the main topic of this Act by informing us that the ensuing quarrel between Cāṇakya and Candragupta is only sham and forms part of Cāṇakya's strategy.

In the scene that follows, Viśākhadatta has clearly brought out the poetic spirit of Candragupta by making him describe the autumn in three fine verses⁵⁰ containing very fine poetic ideas. But this has been used only as a prelude to what follows ; for very soon Candragupta notices the absence of the kaumudī celebrations and comes to know from the kañcukin that the festival has been prohibited by Cāṇakya who is, therefore, sent for. This naturally incites the interest of the spectator who is now curious to know how Cāṇakya would face the situation.

Viśākhadatta at this stage thinks it fit to give the spectator some idea of the spirited nature of Cāṇakya (and the reason for the same), by shifting the scene to the house of Cāṇakya and making the kañcukin describe Cāṇakya's house⁵¹ and pointing out in particular to his utter selflessness. The situation is thus charged with immense possibilities and the spectator only wonders how matters would exactly shape themselves.

The scene again shifts to the Sugāṅga palace where after preliminary greetings and salutations the quarrel ensues as expected. There is a hot exchange of questions and answers, at the end of which ultimately Candragupta has to accept defeat.⁵² Candragupta thereon insults Cāṇakya by declaring that in his eye Rākṣasa is superior to the latter as is evident from the various valourous deeds that he has done till then.⁵³ Cāṇakya taunts Candragupta by referring to his own vow which he has so admirably fulfilled ;⁵⁴ but Candragupta attributes all that to fate⁵⁵ and again insults Cāṇakya by

adding that he was rather too boastful to be considered learned.⁵⁶ The whole scene ultimately ends in Cāṇakya resigning his office and Candragupta ordering the kañcukin to proclaim the same to people.

The whole of this scene is deeply political, bearing ample testimony to the political acumen, accuracy of judgment, right grasp of the situation, and the capacity to manage it, and after all a clear vision possessed by Cāṇakya. He is ready with a reply to every question put to him by the king and every reply of his is so clearly logical that Candragupta could find no flaw in it. The situation is very tense, indeed! And had the spectator not been told beforehand that it was only a sham quarrel, his interest would certainly have flagged. The subject-matter is very abstruse and is couched in a highly scientific terminology and phraseology. Happily enough the short questions of Candragupta at various intervals and the sharp repartee between Cāṇakya and Candragupta go a long way to relieve the tension. But for these the whole scene would have been extremely taxing and even undramatic. Viśākhadatta has shown great skill in managing this scene so admirably. The spectator would certainly agree with Candragupta when he declares at the end of this Act that he has an attack of headache.⁵⁷ There is, however, one thing which gives him relief by rousing his interest viz., the remark⁵⁸ of Cāṇakya to the effect that this split, which apparently Rākṣasa has caused between himself and Candragupta, would ultimately be utilized in bringing Rākṣasa himself into trouble.

The concluding remark⁵⁹ of Candragupta clearly shows how devoted he was to Cāṇakya and how he was smarting under a sense of shame on account of the insults that he had to offer to his preceptor. These remarks only serve to remind the spectator that the quarrel that has just ended was only sham, though both Cāṇakya as well as Candragupta appeared to have been flared up in its course.

The third Act may thus be said to give us the salient features of the character of Candragupta viz., his poetical spirit, his devotion to and faith in his preceptor, Cāṇakya, his sincerity and simplicity. The Act also serves to explain the depth of the working of Cāṇakya's policy by making him reveal the logic behind several of the steps he has taken. But the most important purpose served by this Act is that it completely deludes Rākṣasa who, misled by this strategic quarrel of Cāṇakya with Candragupta, leads an expedition against Candragupta and in approaching Kusumapura is, in fact, approaching his own defeat.

ACT IV

The real skill of a dramatist lies in arranging the various incidents of his plot one after another in such a way that they should be perfectly natural in the places where they are shown to occur. He has also to see that nothing that is stated or represented on the stage is without any use of its own. The greater the number of uses to which one thing or statement is put the greater the skill of the play-wright.

In the very beginning of the Act IV when Karabhaka tells the door-keeper that he wants to see Rākṣasa, the latter tells him that Rākṣasa is suffering from head-ache and hence asks him not to speak very loudly.⁶⁰ Viśākhadatta's skill can be noticed when we find that the head-ache mentioned here is also used by him as an excuse for Malayaketu to pay a visit to Rākṣasa⁶¹ only to find him asking Karabhaka whether he has seen Stavakalaśa in Kusumapura. This naturally tempts Malayaketu to wait outside and overhear the conversation,⁶² naturally because his ears were all the while being poisoned by Bhāgurāyaṇa and other spies of Cāṇakya against Rākṣasa. A glimpse of this poisoning is given to the spectator by Viśākhadatta by introducing Malayaketu on the stage in this Act in

conversation with Bhāgurāyaṇa and asking him to explain what Bhadrabhaṭa and others must have meant when they stated that they wanted to serve him not through Rākṣasa but through Śikharasena, the commander-in-chief.⁶³

Viśākhadatta's stage-craft is also seen when he makes Rākṣasa remark that he has forgotten the exact mission on which Karabhaka was sent by him.⁶⁴ This, it may be noticed, is not unusual in Rākṣasa; and hence does not appear to be unnatural. But at the same time it saves Viśākhadatta a very awkward situation. While Malayaketu and Bhāgurāyaṇa are holding the attention of the spectators, Rākṣasa and Karabhaka would have been required to remain idle on the stage and that would be a great flaw in the construction of the play. Viśākhadatta very cleverly has made Rākṣasa forget the exact mission of Karabhaka and then try to remember the same. Thus while Malayaketu and Bhāgurāyaṇa are having their conversation on one side of the stage, on the other side Rākṣasa is seen sitting and thinking, trying to remember what the mission of Karabhaka might be! And Karabhaka also is keeping silent, being rather puzzled by the silence of Rākṣasa, which he possibly takes as being due to his head-ache.

Then follows a bifocal scene with Rākṣasa and Karabhaka inside the dwelling of Rākṣasa, and Malayaketu and Bhāgurāyaṇa just outside. Karabhaka is giving information of the incidents in Kusumapura—particularly the split between Cāṇakya and Candragupta, and the effects thereof; and Rākṣasa is passing certain remarks at various intervals, thus showing what his future plans would be. Just at this time Malayaketu also at various intervals passes certain remarks or puts questions to Bhāgurāyaṇa concerning the remarks of Rākṣasa; and Bhāgurāyaṇa on his part also so explains the remarks as to convince Malayaketu that Rākṣasa is seriously thinking of allying himself with Candragupta and treacherously leading him (i.e. Malayaketu) to his ruin. This scene is

highly interesting, indeed, and serves to disclose to the spectator the working of Cāṇakya to some extent. Bhāgurāyaṇa, Bhadrabhaṭa and others have absconded at the end of Act I; and there Cāṇakya has suggestively remarked that they all may fare well on their way. The curiosity roused there is now partially satisfied here in Act IV by this bifocal scene which also helps the plot to progress. This scene is also important as giving us some idea of the character of Malayaketu who here figures as a suspicious king with little judgment of his own, easily led by others, putting confidence in wrong types of persons and showing distrust about his own faithful friends and allies like Rākṣasa.

There is, however, one defect in this magnificently managed scene. Śakaṭadāsa has entered the stage along with Rākṣasa almost at the beginning of the Act. But from that time almost upto the end of this bifocal scene he has to remain idle. The main purpose for bringing him on the stage appears to be that he is to be asked to take away Karabhaka and look to his comfort and thus make room for the entrance of Malayaketu.⁶⁵ The awkwardness of the situation whereby Śakaṭadāsa is required to keep idle on the stage so long, is sought to be redressed by making Rākṣasa express his doubt about the plausibility of the rumour disclosed by Karabhaka⁶⁶ and making Śakaṭadāsa pass one remark in support of the same.⁶⁷ But this attempt on the part of Viśākhadatta to save the situation is more artificial than natural; and Śakaṭadāsa's long silence on the stage has to be taken as a defect in the workmanship of Viśākhadatta.⁶⁸

During the bifocal scene the ears of Malayaketu are sufficiently poisoned against Rākṣasa; and in the scene that follows Malayaketu is seen putting several questions to Rākṣasa only to get his prejudices confirmed. The prejudiced mind of Malayaketu can very well be perceived from his svagata remark that he, fortunately, is not dependent on his minister.⁶⁹ The

conversation between Rākṣasa and Malayaketu is also highly political and corresponds to a similar conversation between Cāṇakya and Candragupta in the preceding Act. But whereas that conversation is more spirited, this one appears to be rather insipid. Again in Act III though Candragupta is apparently quarrelling with Cāṇakya yet at heart he is a devoted pupil of his and the spectator is made aware of this by his remarks more than once. In this scene, however, the case is just the reverse; for though Malayaketu is apparently friendly towards Rākṣasa, yet at heart he is thoroughly prejudiced against him. Viśākhadatta has shown great skill in this arranging the scenes in different Acts and thus bringing out some of the salient features of the characters of some of his dramatis personae. This scene ends with Rākṣasa assuring Malayaketu that their success was now sure⁷⁰ and that that was the opportunity for them to march against Candragupta, and Malayaketu leaving the stage with Bhāgurāyaṇa declaring that he would immediately start the expedition.⁷¹

As in the last scene, so also in this, Viśākhadatta has exposed himself to a defect by keeping Bhāgurāyaṇa idle on the stage during the whole of the scene. Queerly enough though Bhāgurāyaṇa has accompanied Malayaketu, he has not one remark to make while the latter is holding conversation with Rākṣasa. It is true that Viśākhadatta does not give any stage direction to show that Bhāgurāyaṇa enters into the presence of Rākṣasa along with Malayaketu.⁷² But even then it would only mean that he was waiting outside for such a long time which also is not less blameworthy from the point of view of stage-craft.

The last scene of this Act brings out the belief of Rākṣasa in the Jyotiḥ-śāstra and affords a fine example of dramatic irony when we see how the astrologer, that Rākṣasa could find, is none else than Kṣapaṇaka—one of Cāṇakya's trusted spies

—who all the while is suggesting that Rākṣasa should now join hands with Candragupta who is at the height of prosperity and that he would be benefitted only if he allies himself with him. Apparently, however, he is giving Rākṣasa a muhūrta for starting his expedition and Rākṣasa is raising an objection to the muhūrta suggested by him, and he again is justifying it. Rākṣasa at this stage little dreams that the astrologer before him is a trusted spy of his very adversary, Cāṇakya. Sub-consciously, however, Rākṣasa is now being dragged towards Candragupta by the force of circumstances; and we see his sub-conscious mind picking up only a corresponding aspect of the phenomenon of sunset as described by him in the concluding stanza of this Act.⁷³ Would rākṣasa have ever believed that he himself would very soon afford an illustration of the general remark he has made? But is it not only about a fortnight later that Rākṣasa was forced to accept the ministership of Candragupta who was instrumental along with Cāṇakya in bringing about the extermination of his former masters, Nandas, whose cause he has been so bravely and faithfully cherishing till then?

Act IV is perhaps the most interesting in the whole of the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa*. But for the two blemishes referred to above, all the scenes here have been so admirably arranged that they have a very tight grip on the mind of the spectator from the start to the finish. The plot also is made to progress very rapidly now. The first three Acts are taken up by the setting of the trap by Cāṇakya by various means which one and all have roused the interest and curiosity of the spectator; and from this Act begins the unravelling of the working of those means. Thus now the spectator knows what mission Bhāguraṇya, Bhadrabhaṭa and others were entrusted with as suggested by the remark of Cāṇakya in Act I.⁷⁴ There are yet many other points⁷⁵ which require further elucidation which Viśakhadatta would give in the Acts that follow. Like each

of the preceding Acts this Act also has brought to light some of the salient features of the character of one of the dramatis personae, Malayaketu, where in fact lies the root⁷⁶ of the defeat of Rākṣasa's plan. But as yet the spectator does not know how exactly this trait in Malayaketu's character would be utilized by Cāṇakya for this purpose. He, therefore, is very eager now to observe what follows. It is from here that the plot is heading towards the denouement and it is from here again that the spectator naturally watches the play with wrapt attention and bated breath right upto the end.

ACT V (INTERLUDE)

The Mudrā-rākṣasa has two interludes⁷⁷—both of them Praveśaka—at the beginning of the fifth and the sixth Acts. An Interlude is a portion of a play making the reader acquainted with some events that have already occurred (or are very soon to occur) and the knowledge of which is absolutely necessary for a clear understanding of what is to follow. Such interlude when wholly in Prakrit is called praveśaka ; but when it is in Sanskrit and Prakrit it is called Viṣkambhaka. The Mudrā-rākṣasa has no Viṣkambhaka.

At the end of Act IV we see how the expedition has started. The events in Act V have occurred some days after the expedition has started and when the armies of Malayaketu are camping in the vicinity of Kusumapura. This naturally has led to some strictness as regards the entrance into and exit from the camp. Nobody is allowed to come into and go out of the camp without having the pass-port from Bhāgurāyaṇa.⁷⁸ The spectator is made acquainted with these circumstances (which have developed since the end of Act IV) through the conversation between Kṣapaṇaka and Siddhārthaka, who (the latter) appears on the stage with a letter and an ornament box, both of them bearing the seal of Rākṣasa as he himself reveals it. The spectator's interest is roused when he learns

from Siddhārthaka that the letter is the one which Cāṇakya has got written by Śakaṭadāsa and sealed with Rākṣasa's ring in Act I ; and that the box also is sealed with the same ring. From Siddhārthaka's remark it is again clear that he has no pass-port from Bhāgurāyaṇa ; and that he is sure that he would be able to go to Pāṭaliputra even without the passport on the ground that he is a trusted man of Rākṣasa. The spectator may also remember that in Act I Cāṇakya has whispered some instructions into the ear of Siddhārthaka which he was asked to execute when the enemy approached the capital. He is, therefore, greatly interested in knowing what the instruction might be and how thereby the main aim of Cāṇakya viz., the winning over of Rākṣasa is going to be achieved. The interlude may, therefore, be said to be very important dramatically as supplying the spectator with some necessary information, and at the same time rousing his interest and helping the plot to progress.

ACT V

This Act is perhaps the most important in the whole of the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* ; for it is here that the climax is reached and the plot begins to head towards a catastrophe, which, of course, has been very cleverly managed by Viśākhadatta. At the end of Act IV Rākṣasa apparently is making for success and it would appear as if he would succeed in his project. The spectator, however, knows full well how this only means Rākṣasa's delusion ; for the very foundation of his plan viz. the estrangement of Cāṇakya from Candragupta is some airy nothing. It is only an irony of fate that Rākṣasa, who in fact was heading towards his own doom and defeat, should be thinking otherwise. The result, therefore, is that the disillusionment, when it comes, is only too shocking for Rākṣasa, so much so that he simply breaks down to the point of committing suicide, but is prevented from doing so by the thought of

saving a faithful friend.

The stage for the first section⁷⁰ of this Act is arranged in such a way that on one side of it is seated Bhāgurāyaṇa for giving pass-port to those who ask for it, and on the other, Malayaketu who has gone there to see Bhāgurāyaṇa but waits outside and listens to what the Kṣapaṇaka is saying to Bhāgurāyaṇa. Bhāgurāyaṇa in a remark tells us that he has to deceive Malayaketu at the instance of Cāṇakya, though he does not like to do so;⁸⁰ while Malayaketu gives expression to his suspicion about Rākṣasa⁸¹ which, as we have already seen, has been created in his mind by Bhadrabhaṭṭa and other spies of Cāṇakya. The scene is thus a bifocal one. Kṣapaṇaka is brought to Bhāgurāyaṇa asking for the mudrā, and there ensues a conversation between them. On the other side there is Malayaketu who overhears their conversation and has his prejudice against Rākṣasa deepened. Viśākhadatta has shown his dramatic skill by making Malayaketu overhear the conversation between Kṣapaṇaka and Bhāgurāyaṇa (both of them spies of Cāṇakya). Bhāgurāyaṇa asks Kṣapaṇaka certain questions in reply to which, apparently with great reluctance, the latter discloses how he had to suffer for being a friend of Rākṣasa who had killed Parvateśvara with a viṣa-kanyā, and further adds that even at that moment Rākṣasa was contemplating a similar cruel act.⁸² After this revelation Bhāgurāyaṇa apparently satisfied with the innocence of Kṣapaṇaka gives him mudrā and requests him to tell the same over again to Malayaketu himself.⁸³ But Malayaketu himself enters into their presence declaring that he has heard all the heart-rending tale. Kṣapaṇaka thereon leaves the stage feeling happy at the idea that his work is done.⁸⁴ This scene brings out effectively a defect in the character of Malayaketu which presents a good contrast to that of Bhāgurāyaṇa. For though the latter is deceiving the former, he feels sorry that he has to do so, while

Malayaketu though apparently friendly to Rākṣasa and his other allies, is yet harbouring a feeling of distrust for them all !

Then follows a short scene where Bhāgurāyaṇa tries to tone down Malayaketu by showing him how Rākṣasa is not to blame for the murder of Parvateśvara, for it was after all a political murder. This short scene is highly important inasmuch as it shows how Malayaketu was easily impressed one way or the other. We have already seen Malayaketu's lack of judgment in the last Act, where he is found being led by Bhāgurāyaṇa in almost every thing. Here this trait in his character is very vividly brought out ; for though he is extremely enraged against Rākṣasa, yet on hearing Bhāgurāyaṇa's argument he tones down his anger and agrees to put up with Rākṣasa until Candragupta is defeated and the promised kingdom is obtained. This again brings out two more baser traits in Malayaketu's character viz. infidelity and selfishness.

The next scene begins when a man brings Siddhārthaka who is captured while trying to escape from the camp with a letter but without a mudrā. Bhāgurāyaṇa begins to cross examine him in the presence of Malayaketu who is also giving some directions to Bhāgurāyaṇa at different intervals. Thus Viśākhadatta has avoided the awkwardness of keeping any character idle on the stage for a long time. Thus Malayaketu asks Bhāgurāyaṇa to take the letter from Siddhārthaka and open it, keeping the seal intact.⁸⁵ He then takes the letter and reads it himself. A few moments later Siddhārthaka, being flogged, drops down from under his arm a casket of ornaments sealed with Rākṣasa's ring ; and when that is brought in, Malayaketu at once remarks that it must be the accompanying present mentioned in the letter, and asks Bhāgurāyaṇa to open it keeping the seal intact.⁸⁶ Now matters grow worse, for the ornaments are those which Malayaketu had presented to Rākṣasa from his own person. This convinces

Malayaketu that the letter was addressed to Candragupta.⁸⁷ After a good flogging again Siddhārthaka reveals to Malayaketu that he was sent by Rākṣasa with the letter to Candragupta. Naturally, therefore, Malayaketu now desires to hear the oral message; and Siddhārthaka gives it saying that the five mleccha kings have contracted friendship with Candragupta, that three of them desire to have his (i.e. Malayaketu's) territory and the remaining two, his elephants and treasury, and that Rākṣasa has requested Candragupta to please them in this respect just as he has pleased him by dismissing Cāṇakya. The poisoning is now complete and Malayaketu now has a distrust not only for Rākṣasa but also for his five mleccha allies.⁸⁸ He thus completely severs himself from them all only to fall an easy prey into the hands of Bhāgurāyaṇa and others, his so-called friends and advisers. This scene not only very well displays the folly of Malayaketu, but also shows how Siddhārthaka and Bhāgurāyaṇa are very clever and shrewd and do their work quite faithfully, even though in the heart of hearts they don't like it. That Malayaketu is an utterly senseless monarch is shown here again by the fact that he puts more faith in the words of Bhāgurāyaṇa and Siddhārthaka as against Rākṣasa and his other allies, so much so that he does not even think of giving them a fair chance to explain themselves if at all whatever was stated by Siddhārthaka was true. In his vanity of being a politician, he has shown himself in worse lights. In this he bears a good contrast to Candragupta who admittedly is far superior to him.

Here Viśākhadatta has introduced Rākṣasa seated in his house, and worrying at the thought that his army has a vast number of Candragupta's men, and ultimately satisfying himself that they are one and all thoroughly dissatisfied with Candragupta.⁸⁹ This clearly shows how man is always prone to construe facts in a light favourable to him. Rākṣasa at this

stage naturally sends orders to the mleccha allies to march in different lines as previously settled, since Kusumapura was now near. He, however, has no idea of what is going on in the mind of Malayaketu and how the latter is harbouring a grave distrust for him and also for the allied princes. Rākṣasa is too straight-forward a politician.

Rākṣasa's considerate nature is again shown by the fact that as soon as the pratihārī of Malayaketu tells him that Malayaketu desires to see him, he, out of consideration for the latter, asks his servant to bring an ornament and puts it on,⁹⁰ little dreaming that the same ornament was going to form a piece of evidence against him. Ironically enough what Rākṣasa has done just to please Malayaketu out of good manners is only shortly to cause his displeasure and to be interpreted by him in exactly the contrary spirit. Viśākhadatta by introducing such incidents in the play has very cleverly managed to rouse and sustain the interest of his spectators.

The brief soliloquy⁹¹ of Rākṣasa at this stage is as suggestive as that at the end of the last Act; and affords a fine example of dramatic irony when Rākṣasa makes a general statement that those on high are liable to fall. The description of Malayaketu⁹² at this stage by Rākṣasa shows only his simplicity and unsuspecting nature which in fact has been fully exploited by his rival Cāṇakya all through, and is enough to make him the hero of a tragedy.

Rākṣasa rightly observes that Malayaketu was deeply engrossed in thought, but has little idea of the storm gathering in his mind. Malayaketu is now thoroughly prejudiced against Rākṣasa and his Mleccha allies and in the conversation that follows he construes every reply or remark of Rākṣasa in a wrong light. Thus he construes the arrangement of the armies as given by Rākṣasa as only confirming the story of Siddhārthaka about them.⁹³ Similarly Rākṣasa's remark that now there was no need of going or coming is also misconstrued

by Malayaketu who significantly remarks 'vijñāyate'.⁹⁴ But in the scene that follows Rākṣasa is faced with several circumstances one after another which he finds very hard to explain away and which to all appearances go to prove that Rākṣasa was conspiring with Candragupta against Malayaketu. Thus there is the evidence supplied by Siddhārthaka, Rākṣasa's own trusted servant, the letter, the ornament-box, the message to be delivered orally as stated in the letter, the seal, the hand of Śakaṭadāsa, and finally the ornament on his very person. Rākṣasa tries to explain away these circumstances variously ; but in vain. Malayaketu is now so thoroughly convinced of the infidelity of Rākṣasa, that Rākṣasa sees no other alternative but to confess to the charge⁹⁵ and tell Malayaketu that he has become anārya.⁹⁶ Malayaketu sees Rākṣasa's unwillingness to admit his crime⁹⁷ and hence asks for an explanation about the letter and the ornament box ; and when Rākṣasa says in reply that it was only the working of fate,⁹⁸ Malayaketu rebukes him for having killed his father and also for planning his own treacherous murder.⁹⁹ Rākṣasa denies the charge and says that Fate alone is responsible for the incident, which enrages Malayaketu who now asks why Jīvasiddhi should not be referred to in this matter. This is a revelation, shocking indeed, to Rākṣasa ; for if he has captured the whole palace of Candragupta, his rival Cāṇakya has captured his very heart.¹⁰⁰ The main purpose of Cāṇakya's plan is served. Malayaketu is thoroughly misled and orders the kings, his mleccha allies, to be killed variously ; but turning to Rākṣasa, with an air of nobility, he says that he is allowing him to go ; for he is not viśrambhaghātī rākṣasa.¹⁰¹ It is indeed an irony of fate that Malayaketu, who is in fact acting treacherously all the while with Rākṣasa, should himself accuse the upright minister, that Rākṣasa has been all along, of being treacherous. Bhāgurāyaṇa now suggests that the expedition should be resumed ; and Malayaketu leaves the stage with his retinue.

The concluding portion of this Act shows Rākṣasa completely broken when he finds that all his plans have ultimately led to the destruction of his own people. He is almost ready to commit suicide, but refrains from doing so only for the sake of his friend Candanadāsa.¹⁰²

This whole scene is very magnificently managed by Viśākhadatta and reminds us of the trial scene in the *Mṛcchakaṭika*. Just as there several circumstances one after the other go against Cārudatta and ultimately the ornaments, like the last straw on camel's back, shatter all his hopes of proving his innocence, so also here several circumstances one after another go against Rākṣasa and ultimately the ornament on his own person decides the matter against him. Like Cārudatta, Rākṣasa also feels constrained to accept the guilt with the effect that he calls himself *anārya*, though very unwillingly. The letter, the ring, the ornament on his person—all these things quietly introduced in the first and the second Acts have now fully served their purpose and the spectators' curiosity is to that extent satisfied. A final schism is brought about between Rākṣasa and Malayaketu and the Mleccha kings. But still the interest of the spectator does not flag; for he yet is eager to know what Rākṣasa would do further. Viśākhadatta has managed in this way to rouse and sustain the interest of his spectators from the very beginning up to the end of this Act, and up to the end of the play also as we shall presently see.

ACT VI (INTERLUDE)

This is the second and perhaps the more important *praveśaka* in the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa*. The end of Act V shows a complete schism between Malayaketu on the one hand and Rākṣasa and the Mleccha kings on the other. Malayaketu is at the height of folly and orders the five Mleccha kings, his erstwhile allies, to be put to death in different ways; but with an air of nobility he lets Rākṣasa go wherever he likes and

boasts of his ability to fight them all together single-handed. Again in Act V we have seen Siddhārthaka being captured on his way to Pāṭaliputra and producing things and making statements which go against Rākṣasa. But we are not told what has happened to him thereafter. All this and several other important facts have been supplied by Viśākhadatta in this *praveśaka*.

Thus from the conversation between Siddhārthaka and Samiddhārthaka we come to know that Siddhārthaka has just come from Malayaketu's camp to Pāṭaliputra and that as soon as he saw Cāṇakya, he was ordered by him to convey to Candragupta the happy news viz. that Malayaketu, completely deluded by the policy of Cāṇakya, has killed his own allies, the five Mlecca kings, and is, on that account, deserted by his other allies for their own safety and is ultimately captured by Bhadrabhaṭa and others; and also that the whole of the Mleccha army was attacked and overpowered by Cāṇakya with a vast army. That Bhadrabhaṭa and others had deserted Candragupta out of disaffection for him, and that Cāṇakya, as a result of a quarrel, had relinquished his duties as Candragupta's minister were only two screws in Cāṇakya's policy, unfathomed even by Rākṣasa.¹⁰³ This *praveśaka* also informs us that Rākṣasa in the growing commotion has left Malayaketu's camp and has gone to Pāṭaliputra; and that Cāṇakya who has got from his spy, Udumbara, a report to that effect has ordered Siddhārthaka and Samiddhārthaka to lead Candana-dāsa to the place of execution and execute him immediately.

This *praveśaka* thus prepares the spectator for the main topic of Act VI viz. how Rākṣasa decides to surrender himself just to save his dear friend Candana-dāsa from the gallows.

ACT VI

The scene in Act VI is laid wholly in the *jñāpodyāna* of Kusumapura. The appearance of the *puruṣa* (a spy of Cā-

nakya) on the stage and his statement, that he has been asked by Cāṇakya to see Rākṣasa at that place, rouses the interest of the spectator and he finds Rākṣasa appearing on the stage.

Rākṣasa's soliloquy here is quite in keeping with his character as depicted upto now and also befitting the condition in which he finds himself at that time. We have to note here, however, how in this soliloquy Viśākhadatta has very cleverly shown the change that was slowly and gradually coming over Rākṣasa. In spite of his repeated failures he still is not prepared to make peace with Candragupta.¹⁰⁴ He would rather prefer to die. But on a second thought he declares that he would rather give up his pratijñā than accept a defeat through his enemy's deceitful policy.¹⁰⁵ Thus we see here how Rākṣasa's mind is sub-consciously working and how only some pertinent circumstance was the only thing required to bring about the change in the mind of Rākṣasa so eagerly desired for by Cāṇakya. The source for such a circumstance is also suggested in this soliloquy when Rākṣasa declares his intention to try to get some news about his friend, Candanadāsa.¹⁰⁶

The remaining portion of this Act forms a scene by itself in which Viśākhadatta has worked on the factor suggestively put forth in the above soliloquy. This again takes advantage of Rākṣasa's sentimentality, softness of heart, and his devotion to a friend. It is after taking into consideration these traits of Rākṣasa's character that Cāṇakya has asked the man to hang himself just in front of Rākṣasa, who on seeing him is sure to be moved by the sight and make enquiries about him. This could very well be utilized to convey to Rākṣasa the fact that Viṣṇudāsa was burning himself to death just before his friend Candanadāsa was put to death by Cāṇakya's hangmen. This tale of two persons attempting to give their life for avoiding to hear of their friend's ill-fated death has the additional effect of intensifying Rākṣasa's feelings. But the last stroke falls when Rākṣasa is told that Candanadāsa has

to face this calamity because he has refused to surrender the family of Rākṣasa by doing which he was given the option to save himself and his own. Rākṣasa's heart is now thoroughly moved by this great sacrifice that Candanadāsa has made for his sake and the sacrifice which his friends were now about to make for him. And the desired effect follows.

True to his spirit, however, Rākṣasa proposes to set Candanadāsa free on the strength of his sword;¹⁰⁷ but even that line of resistance has been closed for him by the shrewd Cāṇakya.¹⁰⁸ Very cleverly thus has Viśākhadatta shown how Cāṇakya's policy worked out the whole situation and how ultimately Rākṣasa had no other course left open but to surrender himself which he now determines to follow.¹⁰⁹

Act VI thus brings us quite close to the denouement and the stage seems to be set for a tragedy, but for the canons of Sanskrit dramaturgy.

ACT VII

This Act falls into two scenes. The first scene is brought to an end by Rākṣasa surrendering himself and one of Cāṇḍālas leaving the stage along with Candanadāsa; while the rest of the Act is covered up by the second. The scene is mainly laid at the impaling station throughout this Act.

The first scene reminds us of a similar scene in the tenth Act of the *Mṛcchakaṭika*, where Cārudatta is being led by the cāṇḍālas to the place of execution. Our author has, however, shown his dramatic sense by not imitating the scene very slavishly. Instead of prolonging the scene tediously by leading Candanadāsa through several proclamation stands like Cārudatta, Viśākhadatta has cut it short by quickly bringing him to the impaling station and making him, on his way there, refer to only some relevant and important matters such as the sacredness of *mitra-kārya*,¹¹⁰ the indiscriminate nature of the cruel or the wicked,¹¹¹ adversity being the touch stone of

friendship,¹¹² and the idea that gods help the bereft relatives of the dead.¹¹³ In a short space, Viśākhadatta has also brought out the salient features of the character of Candanadāsa's wife and son. We see how her love for her husband finds fitting answers for each and every argument that Candanadāsa puts forth to dissuade her from her dreadful resolve. The magnanimity of Candanadāsa's character also becomes evident when he tells his wife how it was an occasion for joy rather than sorrow. He is not, however, without a human touch; and we see him requesting the cāṇḍālas to allow him some time to embrace his son.¹¹⁴ And when he tells his son that he was meeting his end in the cause of a friend, the son also rises to the occasion and remarks that it was but their *kula-dharma*.¹¹⁵ The whole of this scene is a magnificent piece full of pathos and bringing out in only a few strokes the important traits in the characters of Candanadāsa, his wife, and son.

The effect of this portion is heightened by Rākṣasa entering the stage with a toss of curtain and requesting the cāṇḍālas to set Candanadāsa free, and fasten the convict's garland on him.¹¹⁶ This is exactly what Cāṇakya has been aiming at from the very beginning. At this stage in only two strokes has Viśākhadatta brought out the magnanimity of both Candanadāsa as well as Rākṣasa by making the former ask the latter what he has done by rendering all his efforts futile, and by making the latter reply that he was only partially imitating his good deed, and thereby seeking to accomplish his own selfish end.¹¹⁷ Rākṣasa's praise of Candanadāsa is only befitting his magnanimity and speaks highly of his appreciative nature.¹¹⁸

In the beginning of the second scene we see Cāṇakya showing his face and asking the cāṇḍāla as to who has achieved the marvellous feat of catching Rākṣasa, and revealing the magnanimity of his heart by exhorting him to declare that it

was achieved not by Cāṇakya but by the adverse fate of the Nandas.¹¹⁹ This is enough to show Cāṇakya's goodness and humility, inspite of the boast in which he is shown to have indulged more than once in the course of the play. Now follows the unravelling of the riddle part by part, and the curiosity of the spectator roused at various points previously is gradually satisfied. Thus Cāṇakya is made to reveal to Rākṣasa that one of the Cāṇḍālas there was only a spy of his, Siddhārthaka by name, who has been in Rākṣasa's service for some time, and that Śakaṭadāsa was made to write that fraudulent letter without his knowing that he was doing so.¹²⁰ This helps to remove the blot on Śakaṭadāsa's friendship in the eye of Rākṣasa.¹²¹ Viśākhadatta makes Cāṇakya go even further and state all the details of his plan to catch Rākṣasa and also the purpose behind it.¹²²

Rākṣasa is now thoroughly-made aware of what is expected of him; and knows full well that he can't avoid it. Candragupta is now brought on the stage, pouring unstinted praise¹²³ on Cāṇakya and his achievement and bowing down to him. But Cāṇakya's greatness is revealed when he asks Candragupta to bow to Rākṣasa whom he calls *amātya*—nay *amātya-mukhya*, thus taking for granted that Rākṣasa has accepted his proposal. It is not, however, until Cāṇakya tells him in clear terms that Candanadāsa's life depends on Rākṣasa's acceptance of Candragupta's ministership, that the latter agrees to do so.¹²⁴ It is thus the love of a friend alone that persuades Rākṣasa to become the minister of his former enemy.

The height of the magnanimity of the two ministers is yet to be reached and the spectator also is as yet anxious to know what has happened to Malayaketu and Candanadāsa who have been referred to previously. This is done in what follows and the desire of Cāṇakya being fully realised and his purpose served, the play comes to an end with the Bharata-vākya. Thus is a probable tragedy averted and the dictum of Bharata obeyed.

CHAPTER IV

CHARACTERS IN THE MUDRĀ-RĀKSASA

If we leave out of account the *Mṛcchakaṭika*, Viśākhadatta's *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* is perhaps, in the whole range of Sanskrit dramatic literature, the only play containing a large variety of characters, with this difference that whereas the characters in the former are from all walks and stations of life, those in the latter, most of them, belong to the political world. Thus in our play we have kings, ministers, spies or secret emissaries under various disguises, and royal attendants. There are some characters no doubt in it that are free from any political bias ; but they are only too few and insignificant to mar the political atmosphere of the play. The *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* is quite unique in this respect. Let us now study the characters in the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* and form an estimate of Viśākhadatta's skill in character-painting. Before going into the details, however, it may be observed that Viśākhadatta, like Kālidāsa and other Sanskrit playwrights of note, has given us characters in twos or threes. Thus we have two ministers, Cāṇakya and Rākṣasa ; two kings, Candragupta and Malayaketu ; two friends, Śakaṭadāsa and Candanadāsa, (to which may be added the name of Jīvasiddhi to make the number three); and a large number of spies or secret emissaries on either side. It is by contrasting these with one another that Viśākhadatta has very often succeeded in making his characters more living as we shall presently see it.

Let us now start with the ministers who form the most important class by themselves in this play. It is the plots and counter-plots of the rival ministers that form the main bulk of the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa*. But it may be intriguing to

observe that Viśākhadatta has shown great skill in portraying the ministers and bestowing individuality on either of them in various ways. Cāṇakya is portrayed by Viśākhadatta as a minister and a politician par excellence, full of self-confidence verging on even boastfulness¹ which is almost shuddering, ever vigilant, quick of judgment, shrewd and inspiring awe, nay terror.² He has keen intellect and sharp memory ; and with a quick grasp of the situation, he has the capacity to turn almost every thing to his advantage with the least effort.³ Being a man of clear thinking, his acts are one and all always backed up by sound reasoning ;⁴ and this adds to the force of his arguments and remarks. He is a good conversationalist and has succeeded in eliciting the required information from the mouth of Candanadāsa.⁵ He also displays the qualities of outspokenness and self-respect which are noticed even by the Kañcukin.⁶ Even Rākṣasa has high regard for his abilities as a minister and a politician.⁷ But there is one circumstance about him which inspires all about him with awe and terror rather than love. He would use any means for accomplishing his object. That is why we find almost everybody calling him deridingly *baṭu* or *baṭuka* and even *durātman* ; and that is again why Candanadāsa so much hates him and has very bitter words to say about him.⁸ It must, however, be said to his credit that his aim is, at least so far as the Mudrā-Rākṣasa is concerned, not selfish ; and Viśākhadatta has taken care to elevate him by depicting in a few strokes some aspects of his private life. Thus he is shown to be utterly disinterested, so much so that though commanding the highest respect from Candragupta as his preceptor and minister, he is living in an ordinary hut with almost no belonging of his own.⁹ However cruel and stern as a politician he is, he can yet appreciate the merits of even his enemies.¹⁰ He is, however, a firm master of his emotions to such an extent that he appears to be almost inhuman, a man without any emotions at all.¹¹

This, however, does not mean that he has absolutely no emotions. The fact is that he has all his emotions perfectly under his control as can be easily seen from the circumstance that almost all his remarks showing emotions are *svagata*. The general impression that we get of Cāṇakya on reading the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* is that of a simple Brāhmaṇa, easily irascible by nature, a shrewd politician employing any means to achieve his aims, but disinterested and appreciative of real merit wherever it is found. But for the relief afforded by his virtues like simplicity and appreciative nature, this mighty minister of Candragupta would have been perhaps highly detestable in spite of all his brilliance in politics, even as a cobra with a jewel on his hood.

Cāṇakya bears a good contrast to Rākṣasa who, even as Cāṇakya admits it, is endowed with *prajñā*, *vikrama* and *bhakti* all together.¹² If Cāṇakya's aim is not selfish and hence perhaps noble, Rākṣasa's aim is nobler still. He is fighting the cause of his masters even after they have been exterminated by Cāṇakya.¹³ No doubt he tries to do away with his enemy Candragupta by any means whatsoever. But it must be admitted that he has not directed any of his questionable means against any other person, much less towards a friend and an ally. In all his other deeds Rākṣasa gives us the impression of nobility and magnanimity hardly found in his rival. His political acumen is seen when we hear an account of the various plans devised by him to do away with Candragupta and also when we see him in spite of the failure of all his previous plans at once making himself ready to take advantage of the reported split between Cāṇakya and Candragupta, and giving immediate instructions to his spy in that connection. Rākṣasa is more emotional and considerate. He is touched to the quick¹⁴ to see the sad plight of his spy Virādhagupta. Being highly pleased with Siddhārthaka for rescuing his friend Śakaṭadāsa, he bestows on him ornaments on his own person. Sudden

outbursts¹⁵ on the caprices of fate in which he indulges at times also bear testimony to his emotional nature. He puts on the ornaments¹⁶ sent to him by Malayaketu only out of regard for the latter and also for the Kañcukin who had brought them. Similarly he is careful enough to call for an ornament¹⁷ and put it on when he has to go and see Malayaketu. It is in this considerate and emotional nature of his that lies the root of Cāṇakya's success in entrapping Rākṣasa. Fidelity to a friend is yet another noble trait in Rākṣasa's character and Cāṇakya has not been slow to exploit it to his advantage. We see how he identifies himself with Śakaṭadāsa and also Candanadāsa. He is highly grieved to think that Śakaṭadāsa¹⁸ has proved faithless but never blames him severely on that account and is greatly relieved¹⁹ to know that Śakaṭadāsa was after all not a faithless friend. For Candanadāsa he has staked his very life and has ultimately given up his own long cherished desire to avenge the destruction of his former masters and accepted the ministership of his enemy. As a politician he falls short of the height reached by Cāṇakya and commits blunders in various ways. Being more distracted and worried he also finds his memory failing him at times. We are impressed by his magnanimity and nobility right from the very beginning upto the very end²⁰ of the play with the result that in spite of his ultimate failure and in spite of his defects and drawbacks as a politician our sympathies are all for him than for his rival Cāṇakya. Rākṣasa in fact is an embodiment of some of the loftiest human virtues coupled with some minor characteristics which only make us feel that he is a man of our own flesh and blood.

Next we come to the two princes Candragupta and Malayaketu. The former is a devoted and well-disciplined pupil of Cāṇakya for whom he has so much regard that he is simply unwilling to go against any desire of the latter or to do any thing without consulting him. In his soliloquy he clearly tells

us how he is much worried over the command of Cāṇakya to the effect that he should pick up a quarrel with him and conduct the state affairs independently for some time. He is beside himself with shame for having disrespected his preceptor at his own command and wonders how others dare actually do it.²¹ We have also to notice the intelligence and artistic spirit displayed by Candragupta in his soliloquy describing the worries of a king,²² the fickleness of Lakṣmī,²³ and the autumn season.²⁴ He also shows his brilliance in the sham quarrel with his preceptor by putting him very appropriate questions. Candragupta, so far as our play goes, has little independent existence of his own ; but in whatever existence he has, he has shown himself to be a worthy disciple of Cāṇakya, the consummate politician, who also has described him as a king more interested in his subjects' welfare than in their money,²⁵ and as entirely dependent on him in the affairs of the state.²⁶ No wonder that he expresses his full appreciation of this monarch by contrasting him with the Nandas more than once.²⁷

Quite a different type of king is represented by Malayaketu. He is not only foolish and conceited, but even treacherous. He has absolutely no judgment of his own and is very easily led away by whatever he is told by this or that person. The worse of it is that he is very easily led to distrust even his best allies and thus bring ruin on himself with his own hands.²⁸ He is brave and warlike and has a sense of pride which makes him abstain from performing the obsequies of his father until he avenges his death.²⁹ His simplicity is evident from the fact that he himself goes out to see Rākṣasa when he is suffering from headache and also from the fact that he sends ornaments from his own person to Rākṣasa with a pressing request that he should put them on.³⁰ Only he is too rash and thoughtless and hasty in his actions and conclusions which makes him a bad soil for a politician like Rākṣasa.³¹

We may now turn to the two friends of Rākṣasa—Śakata-dāsa and Candanadāsa. The former is not only a friend but also an employee of Rākṣasa who has stationed him in Kusumapura with a large amount of money to help his secret workers.³² Cāṇakya has rightly accused him of aiding and instigating persons to plot against Candragupta's life and sentenced him to be impaled.³³ But this Kāyastha has been very cleverly made to fit in Cāṇakya's plan. A letter is got written by him without letting him know the names of the addressor and the addressee. He is a very straight-forward person, and never dreams that his rescue by Siddhārthaka was only a part of a big plan of Cāṇakya. He does not know till the end that Siddhārthaka was only a spy of Cāṇakya. Again when the ornaments come for sale he does not care to know from whom he was buying them. He was only a kāyastha, a scribe, and not a politician. That explains all the part played by him in this play i.e. the part of unconsciously lending a helping hand not to his friend and master Rākṣasa, but to his rival and enemy, Cāṇakya. His friendship, however, is unquestionable and even Rākṣasa is unwilling to admit that he would act treacherously.³⁴ But instead of being of much help to his master and friend Rākṣasa, he only proves a source of trouble to him owing to his simplicity.

A much dearer friend of Rākṣasa we find in Candanadāsa who from the very beginning is shown to have enjoyed his highest confidence. For Rākṣasa had left his family with him only before he left Kusumapura for reasons of his own. This confidence, as we see it in the play, is certainly not misplaced. Like a true friend and a shrewd merchant, Candanadāsa before going to Cāṇakya has made arrangements for the removal of Rākṣasa's family to some safer place; and like a true friend again has he refused to surrender the same even at the risk of losing not only his wealth and family but even his life. Candanadāsa really evokes our admiration and certainly de-

serves any sacrifice on the part of Rākṣasa. The real success of Cāṇakya's plan lies in this noble trait in the character of these two friends which Cāṇakya has rightly observed³⁵ and well utilised. Rākṣasa also is fully aware of the worth of his friend and hence when he hears of the calamity to which he has exposed himself, he feels that the calamity has befallen not Candanadāsa but himself.³⁶ The nobility of Candanadāsa is enhanced by Viśākhadatta in the last Act by putting several remarks in his mouth. But still more important is the way in which he tries to console his wife and son; and also the fact that he is happy at the idea of having to die for the cause of a friend.³⁷ His shrewdness is also seen in his conversation with Cāṇakya, who, however, proves more than a match for him.

Of the secret emissaries and spies either mentioned or actually brought on the stage in the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa*, only three deserve special consideration, viz. Siddhārthaka, Bhāgurāyaṇa, and Jīvasiddhi all of whom have acquitted themselves quite excellently in the responsibility thrown on them by Cāṇakya. Unfortunately Rākṣasa could not get capable spies and fate also may be said to be adverse to him. But Cāṇakya had, it would appear, a trained eye for men, so much so that none of his spies may be said to be a failure. The failure of Rākṣasa's plan is partly due to some weakness of his spies such as extravagance or unwise haste displayed by Pramodaka and Dāruvarman respectively, partly to the extreme vigilance and shrewdness of Cāṇakya as can be seen from the way in which he quietly made Vairocaka, covered all over in garlands, enter the palace seated on the female elephant of Candragupta and also followed by the latter's feudatories, and also partly to accident such as the appearance of ants with particles of food in their mouth which again was very shrewdly interpreted by Cāṇakya. On the whole, however, the spies on either side appear to be quite well up in their business and would readily

answer the description of their class given by Cāṇakya in Act I.³⁸ Nipunaka and Virādhagupta, as can be seen from the account they have given of their mission, have done their work quite excellently. But Viśākhadatta has not cared to develop their characters any further. The same may be said about almost all other spies except the three referred to above, which now we shall consider one by one.

Siddhārthaka forms a very important screw in the plan of Cāṇakya. From the time that he is directed to get the letter written by Śakaṭadāsa in Act I till the end of the play we see him playing an important part. It is true that he is doing every thing according to the instructions of his master, Cāṇakya ; but we must give him due credit for the ability he has displayed in executing the orders so well. After receiving the present from Rākṣasa he has shown his intelligence by putting forth a plausible excuse³⁹ to be allowed to deposit the same with Rākṣasa only and also for being admitted into his service. Cleverly again has he brought the ring to Śakaṭadāsa's notice and readily given it to Rākṣasa to win his full confidence. The part played by him in Act V is simply marvellous and the various replies that he has given to Malayaketu and also to Rākṣasa are a sure sign of his fertile brain and resourcefulness. He has a mixed feeling for Cāṇakya and his policy. On the one hand we see him eulogizing the nīti of Cāṇakya,⁴⁰ but on the other we also see how he is in dread for him,⁴¹ so much so that he is prepared to do even the worst of jobs in obedience to Cāṇakya's orders just to avoid his wrath. In Siddhārthaka thus we get a fine portrait of an intelligent and dilligent servant, faithfully executing the orders of his master without questioning the goodness or otherwise of the job entrusted to him.

Bhāgurāyaṇa is another important screw in the plan of Cāṇakya, perhaps even more important than Siddhārthaka. Though we are not told whether he had received any instruc-

tions from Cāṇakya, we can guess that he too must have received some general instructions from his master. At the end of Act I it is revealed to us that Bhāgurāyaṇa (and also Bhadrabhaṭa and others) have absconded ; and from Cāṇakya's remark there we know that he must have gone away on some mission of Cāṇakya himself. It is not, however, until Act IV that we get a glimpse of Bhāgurāyaṇa's character or of his mission. There we see that he has won the confidence of Malayaketu in full so much so that he has now become his counsellor and referee almost at every step. This must have been the natural result of the fact that it was Bhāgurāyaṇa, to all appearance, that had helped Malayaketu to save himself from the clutches of Cāṇakya by running away from Kusumapura.⁴² Once the confidence of Malayaketu is won, Bhāgurāyaṇa goes on poisoning his ears against Rākṣasa and his other Mleccha allies. There must, indeed, have been several occasions when Bhāgurāyaṇa did this. Viśākhadatta has, however, given us only a choice few. Thus we see Bhāgurāyaṇa cleverly interpreting⁴³ the request of Bhadrabhaṭa and others to Malayaketu, and again equally cleverly conducting his talk with Kṣapaṇaka⁴⁴ and crossing Siddhārthaka when brought a captive before him for trying to run away from the camp without a pass-port.⁴⁵ But the real spark of his intelligence is seen when he avoids, with a very plausible excuse, referring the letter directly to Śakaṭadāsa⁴⁶ which would have certainly frustrated the whole plan, and also when he, by a plausible argumentation, convinces Malayaketu of the advisability of pulling on with Rākṣasa for some time at least.⁴⁷ He would not miss even the slightest opportunity of poisoning Malayaketu's mind against Rākṣasa as can be seen from his remark when Rākṣasa declares that he had bestowed the ornaments on Siddhārthaka for having rescued his friend Śakaṭadāsa.⁴⁸ Bhāgurāyaṇa is, indeed, a compeer of Siddhārthaka in almost every respect, though perhaps superior to him in

intelligence and with his conscience still alive. That is why we find him expressing regret at the idea of having to deceive a trustful person like Malayaketu.⁴⁹

Jivasiddhi's qualifications have been described by Cāṇakya himself in the first Act.⁵⁰ He is thus only a Brāhmaṇa friend of Cāṇakya well-versed in politics and the *catuṣṣaṣṭyaṅga jyotiḥśāstra*, acting under the guise of a Kṣapapaṇaka as a spy of Cāṇakya even before the extermination of the Nandas. He also has carried out his responsibilities so well that even a politician like Rākṣasa is misled to look upon him as his friend. Though he is referred to in Act I by Cāṇakya and in Act II by Rākṣasa, we do not see him actually on the stage until the end of the fourth Act where he has displayed his skill in the use of language and also his proficiency in the *jyotiḥśāstra*.⁵¹ We see him all the while speaking in words with double entendre and besides supplying Rākṣasa with the *muhūrta* as required by him and trying to convince him of the advisability of catching that very *muhūrta*, he is also suggesting to him that he should stand to gain by allying himself with Candragupta and also conveying to him a warning that his alliance with a foreigner like Malayaketu by setting aside Candragupta, after all his own man, would surely lead to his destruction.⁵² The more important purpose served by him, however, is that of poisoning the ears of Malayaketu against Rākṣasa by declaring to Bhāgurāyaṇa within Malayaketu's hearing that Parvateśvara was killed by Rākṣasa only and not by Cāṇakya. That this was meant to be heard by Malayaketu is clear from his own remark while leaving the stage in Act V.⁵³ Thus we see that Jivasiddhi also, in the limited scope that he has in this play, has shown a remarkable skill. But we do not hear from this Jivasiddhi any remark expressive of a sense of wonder at or admiration for or even dissatisfaction at Cāṇakya's policy as we hear it from the mouths of the other spies⁵⁴ of Cāṇakya that we have studied above. This is

but quite natural in the case of Jīvasiddhi who is not a servant but a fellow student of Cāṇakya.

Among the minor characters we have two kañcukins, two pratīharīs, and persons like Karabhaka and Samiddhārthaka who have been portrayed only in a few bold strokes. Among these only two deserve a special mention—the wife and the son of Candanadāsa. Even these, like all other minor characters, are portrayed in a few bold strokes only. Thus Candanadāsa's wife is shown to rise to the occasion and we see how she finds a suitable argument in reply to each of the arguments put forth by her husband.⁵⁵ Her love for her husband has made her not only bold but also sharp-witted. Like an ideal Aryan lady of Ancient India she wants to immolate herself before she is compelled to listen to an evil report about her husband, not earing for any thing, not even for her child. Even the son in one sentence shows himself worthy of a father like Candanadāsa when he tells his father that it was but their kula-vrata to die in the cause of a friend.⁵⁶ What a high ideal, indeed, for a young lad to realise! The woman in Candanadāsa's wife and the child in his son clearly come out when they are full of grief and cry out for help or when the latter asks what he would do after his father's death. It is, indeed, by touches like these that Viśākhadatta has succeeded in imparting life and individuality to these characters.

Before bringing this chapter to a close we must consider another important question in connection with the characters in the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* viz. who is the hero of the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa*? And the question becomes perplexing, indeed, when it is found that critics are divided in their views on this point, some putting forth the claims of Cāṇakya to the position and others being equally vehement in bestowing the honour on Rākṣasa. It is not, therefore, quite easy to decide the question either way particularly as there appear to be cogent arguments in support of the claims of both. We shall, therefore,

try to tackle the problem by asking the question 'Who is a hero?' and considering the claims of either in the light of the answer that we get to this question.

The hero as the very name suggests it, is one who is mainly responsible for the development of the plot. While defining an act⁵⁷ it has been suggested by oriental authorities on dramaturgy that the hero should be present on the stage in each and every act. Several qualities⁵⁸ also have been enumerated as the qualities of a hero in general, though all of them may not necessarily be found to exist in any single hero of any Sanskrit play known to us. Four different types of heroes⁵⁹ have further been described under the appellations of dhīroddhata, dhīralalita, dhīroddāta and dhīrapraśānta ; in general it has been stated that they are gods, kings, generals or ministers, and lastly Brāhmaṇas or merchants respectively. Besides the hero some plays may also have a pratināyaka (rival hero) or a upanāyaka (a sub-hero, if we may so call him). In spite of all this information, however, it is not always quite easy to fix up the hero of a Sanskrit drama as can very well be realised from the controversies raging on this point in connection with plays like the Veṇī-saṁhāra and the Mudrā-Rākṣasa. Restricting ourselves to the latter we may note that neither Cāṇakya nor Rākṣasa is actually present on the stage in each and every act, though in a way each of them may be said to carry the plot further almost at every step. For it is the plots and the counter-plots of these two rivals that form the main bulk of its theme. Both again can be said to be possessed of several of the qualities expected in a hero, and may be classed under one or the other of the four types mentioned above. Thus it may be seen that if some conditions are satisfied by both, there are others which are satisfied by neither. And particularly when it is observed that both these rivals by their plots and counter-plots arrest our attention throughout the play, it becomes extremely difficult, if not al-

together impossible, to decide the question in favour of any one of them.

According to western critics⁸⁰ it is generally a tragedy that has some one or two figures towering above the rest. The other characters there are so painted that they stand on a level far below the principal ones. Tragedy, again, is often called after the name of the chief figure, who gives significance and tone to it. The idea of a tragedy is foreign to Sanskrit literature; and yet it may be observed that what has been said above regarding English tragedy can very well apply to several of our Sanskrit plays such as the *Śākuntala*, the *Uttarā-rāmacarita* and the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa*. But for the canon of Bharata these, with little alterations in their present corpus, would have ranked among the finest tragedies in the world. The tragic element in these is only too imposing to be lost sight of.

Coming to the problem of the hero we find tragic hero defined as 'a person neither eminently virtuous or just, nor yet involved in crime by deliberate vice or villainy, but by some reason of human frailty.' The tragic hero has the root of his fall not so much in external circumstances as in his own character. It must be remembered that it is not the ultimate success or otherwise that prove or disprove the claim of a *dramatis persona* to the position of a hero. It is rather a towering personality endowed with lofty qualities that makes a hero; and when certain apparently innocent traits in the character of such a person lead him to his ruin, our sympathies are naturally roused in his favour and we automatically acknowledge him as the hero, of course, a tragic hero. Turning now to *Rākṣasa* we find that he is clearly possessed of a towering personality made all the more imposing by the possession of magnanimity of heart, staunch fidelity to his masters even after their complete destruction, a sound brain and great

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valour. Besides these again he is endowed with a softness of heart, considerateness for others, and sentimentality which lie at the root of almost every blunder that he has committed in the play leading ultimately to his defeat. It may be easily seen that it is on him that our attention is focussed from the very beginning of the play right upto its end. From the moment Cāṇakya declares⁹¹ his unqualified admiration for Rākṣasa and also his intention—nay eagerness—to harness him into the services of Candragupta, we are interested more in Rākṣasa and his actions (or rather re-actions to the working of Cāṇakya) than anything else. Even when our curiosity is roused by Cāṇakya's plots, a deeper thought will perhaps reveal that the curiosity at its base is not for Cāṇakya so much as for Rākṣasa. We want, for example, to know how the plan of Cāṇakya will affect Rākṣasa and what will be his re-action thereto. Both Cāṇakya as well as Rākṣasa are equally active hatching plots after plots for defeating one another ; and we are surely interested in their working. But the main point of interest is not so much the plot as the person who carries our sympathies. And there can hardly be two opinions that our sympathies all through and ever increasingly are for Rākṣasa.

Nor is Viśākhadatta slow to show his own inclination in this connection. He has bestowed much care, it would appear, on Rākṣasa whose character has on that account been more dynamic. The character of Cāṇakya is almost the same throughout the play as what we see of him in Act I. Again there are hardly any ups and downs confronting Cāṇakya so far as the MR. is concerned. Rākṣasa, on the other hand, is made to undergo several ups and downs, and we see him moving on so to say. It is these vicissitudes which Rākṣasa has to face that arrest all our interest ; and in the play more than once we find ourselves watching Rākṣasa and his actions with bated breath. At the end of almost every act we see Rākṣasa prominently intriguing us, a fact which can be said

to show that Viśākhadatta desired to emphasize Rākṣasa rather than his rival Cāṇakya.

Inferior to Cāṇakya as a politician though, Rākṣasa has yet traits even nobler than his opponent. Thus we see that Rākṣasa is inspired by a sense of duty and devotion to his masters even after their annihilation—a fact which is far more sublime than the boastful fulfilment of his vow by Cāṇakya which surly smacks of cruelty and selfishness by the side of the selfless devotion of Rākṣasa. Viśākhadatta, no doubt, tries to bring this trait into relief by making the chamberlain in Act III describe his disinterestedness and selflessness. But even then Cāṇakya hardly appears to equal—much less to tower over, Rākṣasa in point of selflessness. Cāṇakya again falls too short of Rākṣasa in point of friendship. He is unscrupulous enough to get the innocent⁶² Sarvārthasiddhi murdered even though he had quietly retired to a penance-grove. Some justification for this may perhaps be found in the fact that Sarvārthasiddhi was a scion of the Nanda family and hence an enemy. But the murder of Parvateśvara through a poison maiden and that of Vairocaka by the falling arch can find no justification whatsoever ; for as we know they were allies and therefore friends of Candragupta and hence of Cāṇakya. The mischief intended by Rākṣasa could have been averted by punishing the poison-maiden and the carpenter and other culprits without endangering the lives of the allies. These murders can at best be justified as political murders ; but they certainly make their perpetrator appear in bad light before Rākṣasa who has acted with all the magnanimity of a hero under similar circumstances. We see how Rākṣasa is greatly pained to learn that the forged letter was actually written by his dear friend Śakaṭadāsa, but is not prepared to believe it ; how ultimately he is greatly relieved when it is revealed to him, that Śakaṭadāsa wrote the letter only without knowing what he was doing. Rākṣasa is very unwilling to entertain any suspicion regarding

a friend even though he has every reason to do so. Nobler still is the attitude shown by him to Malayaketu his erstwhile friend and ally now turned into an enemy. He was brought a captive before Cāṇakya who referred the matter to Rākṣasa. And he like a noble hero declared that Malayaketu's life should be saved in view of their past friendship.⁶³ Can we ever imagine Cāṇakya rising to this height? Not that Cāṇakya is totally lacking the qualities of a hero. He, in fact, is second to none; and is clearly responsible to a great extent for the progress of the plot. We also have admiration for his political brain. But Rākṣasa in addition to the political brain (acknowledged even by his rival⁶⁴) has certain other accomplishments which raise him far above Cāṇakya and easily mark him as the hero of the play.

That Viśākhadatta intended Rākṣasa to be the hero of his play is shown by other considerations also. It is a general rule that a play is named after the chief person i.e. the hero or the heroine or both, as can be seen from names like Cāru-datta, Abhijñāna-Śākuntala, and Mālati-Mādhava. In the whole range of Sanskrit dramatic literature we can hardly find an instance where a play is named after a character who is not its hero. Again the Bharata-vākya is generally put into the mouth of the hero only, rather than any other character. In the MR. we find both these considerations to be in favour of Rākṣasa only, who may, therefore, be declared to be the hero of the play even in the opinion of Viśākhadatta.

We may now conclude this chapter by noting a peculiarity of the MR. so far as characterization is concerned. Viśākhadatta has introduced the main characters in the first four Acts one after the other. Thus Act I brings before us Cāṇakya, while his rival Rākṣasa is introduced on the stage in Act II. Similarly Candragupta appears on the stage for the first time in Act III and it is not till Act IV that we see Malayaketu and Bhāgurāyaṇa on the stage. The author thus seems to have paid

greater attention to his characters and their introduction on the stage ; and all through the play our interest is focussed more on character than on action. It must be said to the credit of Viśākhadatta that inspite of the abstruseness of his theme and absence of the sentiments of love and laughter, he has by his skill in character-painting endowed the play with an intrinsic interest all its own, though in doing this, as he himself has stated it, he must have been required to take infinite pains even like Rākṣasa, the minister of his own creation.

CHAPTER V

SOURCES

Our study and appreciation of Viśākhadatta's abilities as a dramatist or a poet is bound to remain incomplete unless we take into consideration the debt which owes to his predecessors. To be able to know accurately what Viśākhadatta has achieved in his work we must know what he has borrowed from others. A knowledge of the exact form and nature of the matter or material borrowed by him will enable us to understand the real merit or otherwise of Viśākhadatta.

Here at the very outset we must remember that the indebtedness of a poet or a play-wright might pertain to the main theme or story with or without some details, or to the use of various things or articles in the story, or to the arrangement of the different scenes, or to various other ideas and technical expressions incorporated in the work. It is but well-known that the two great epics, the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, together with the Bṛhatkathā and the Purāṇas form the inexhaustible store-house from which most of the Sanskrit authors have drawn their themes. It is only rarely that the theme is purely a creation of the poet's imagination.¹ It is for the critic to find out the source or the sources of the play-wright and compare the theme in the original with what has been given by the latter and see the effects of the changes introduced by him in the original. As for the use of various things or the arrangement of the different scenes and so on, the critic has to cast a glance through the earlier literature and see if it presents any parallels—striking and close ones—to what is found in the work before him. In such cases again it is the business of the critic to compare the matter before

him with the parallel available and see how far the author has imitated the earlier parallel and how far he has been able to leave his own stamp thereon. It is considerations like these that ultimately enable a critic to judge of the place of an artist and his work among others and thus help him to form his own opinion about the same.

Coming to the *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* it is evident that its author has derived his plot from some earlier sources. For, the story of the overthrow of the Nandas and the installation of Candragupta Maurya in their place is a historical fact recorded not only in Greek chronicles but also found in several of the *Purāṇas*,² and also incorporated in the *Bṛhatkathā* as can be concluded from its presence in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* and *Bṛhatkathā-mañjarī*.³ A reference to this incident is also found in the *Arthaśāstra*⁴ of Kauṭilya and the *Nīṭisāra* of Kāmaṇḍaka.⁵

According to the *Purāṇas*,⁶ Mahānandin, the last of the Śiśunāgas, married a śūdra woman and thus became the founder of a fresh dynasty. His son, Mahāpadma (who is also called Dhanananda) and his eight sons are together known as the nava nandāḥ who were uprooted by Cāṇakya alias Kauṭilya (also called Viṣṇugupta) who placed Candragupta Maurya on the throne. Greek chronicles,⁷ however, attribute the low origin of the Nandas not to the low caste of their mother, but to a low caste father, 'a handsome barber, a paramour of the queen of the Nanda who murdered her husband, the king.' Viśākhadatta differs from both these in mentioning the Nandas as mighty kings of illustrious lineage,⁸ though he has skilfully utilised the traditional account about the Nandas, particularly their avarice and hoarded wealth. A reference in the MR. I. 12 to the cause of Cāṇakya's rage shows that Viśākhadatta knew the story as narrated in the *Bṛhatkathā*.

The Purāṇas make Candragupta the son of Murā, a low caste woman. There are several legends about Candragupta in Greek as well as Buddhistic and Jain chronicles.⁹ According to the latter he is called Maurya because he belonged to the clan known as Moriya, a branch of the illustrious Śākya. A posthumous son, he was seen by Cāṇakya 'holding a mock court on the village common as the rajah of the village boys'. Cāṇakya, incensed at the insult heaped on him by Dhana-nanda, took hold of this boy and after extermination of the Nandas placed him on their throne. Viśākhadatta is silent on the exact significance or derivation of the name Maurya as applied to Candragupta,¹⁰ though he has shown him as an upstart of obscure or low birth.¹¹ He has also made Cāṇakya call him Vṛṣala¹² all through the play.

Greek chroniclers are silent about Cāṇakya who, therefore, according to some is a mythological figure. But the overwhelming evidence of Indian literature proves his historicity beyond all doubt. The story of his having exterminated the Nandas and placed Candragupta Maurya on the throne in their place is narrated not only in the Purāṇas but also in Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra and Kāmandaka's Nītisāra. Viśākhadatta has made use of the Bṛhatkathā story and also the traditional information about Cāṇakya viz. his wrathful nature, his insult by the ruling Nanda prince, his vow to overthrow the Nandas by any means, and to wear his śikhā loose until the vow is fulfilled.

We thus see that Viśākhadatta has derived only the barest skeleton of his theme from the sources before him. Besides the prologue, he has also spun out of his imagination several details of great dramatic significance such as the sham quarrel between Cāṇakya and Candragupta, the poisoning of Malaya-keṭu's ears against Rākṣasa and the other allies and the consequent schism between them, the whole story of Candanadāsa and also the plans and the counter-plans of Cāṇakya and

Rākṣasa. All these details have been so well woven into one fine texture that one really wonders at the art displayed here by Viśākhadatta. The same is true of characters also in the MR. For beside the few characteristics of two principal characters viz. Cāṇakya and Candragupta, and a few characteristics of the Nandas, Viśākhadatta has borrowed nothing so far as the characters in the MR. are concerned. Thus the faithful and magnanimous Rākṣasa, the self-sacrificing Candanadāsa and his wife, the shrewd and loyal Siddhārthaka and Bhāgurāyaṇa, and even the rash and vain Malayaketu are the creation of Viśākhadatta himself who, therefore, deserves credit for his achievement in this respect also.

Viśākhadatta's indebtedness to Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra is only too obvious. Almost at every step we come across some technical terms or ideas which have been borrowed by our author from that famous work on politics. Śāḍguṇya, maṇḍala, upāya, vyāyāma, prakṛti, suraṅgā, jigīṣu, vyasana, ātmaguṇa, tikṣṇa, rasada, tantrayukti, antaḥkopa, and bāhyakopa are only a few of them. The terms parikleśa, upāya, tikṣṇa, rasada, and vyāyāma have been used by Viśākhadatta in the sense ascribed to them by Kauṭilya in his Arthaśāstra. Flogging as a means of extorting confessions and eliciting required information from the accused, adopted in the fifth act of the MR., has been actually recommended by Kauṭilya at Arthaśāstra IV. 8. Similarly the idea that persons having the mudrā alone were to be allowed to enter or leave the camp, made use of in MR. Act V again, has been clearly stated at Arthaśāstra II. 34. The construction of a yantra-toraṇa also seems to be hinted at in Arthaśāstra I. 20. The untouchability of the cāṇḍālas is again suggested by a simile at Arthaśāstra I. 14. Kauṭilya also has laid down that a widow may remarry,¹³ preferably within the family of her deceased husband; and Viśākhadatta has referred to this idea by making Rākṣasa blame Lakṣmī by describing her as an ill-bred woman gone

to another family.¹⁴ Similar is the case with the idea of releasing all prisoners as ordered by Cāṇakya at the close of the play.¹⁵ From these and similar other instances it may easily be seen that Viśākhadatta was a close student of Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra which he must have had before him while composing the Mudrā-Rākṣasa.

The signet-ring, the letter and the ornaments are the things invested with great dramatic significance in the MR.; and it may be interesting to see some parallels to these in other earlier works. Thus we know that the ring has been used in the Rāmāyaṇa for the purpose of pratyabhijñā when Māruti convinces Sītā of his being a messenger of Rāma by showing her the latter's ring. Kālidāsa has used the ring in two of his plays. In the Mālavikāgnimitra it has been used to effect the release of Mālavikā, while in the Śākuntala it can be said to form the pivot on which the whole story turns. For it is the ring that brings about the union and it is its absence again that brings about the separation of two loving souls. Viśākhadatta has used the mudrā in a still different way. For it does not lead to the release of any-body, nor does it bring about the union of two loving souls, nor again does its loss result in their separation. Rākṣasa's signet ring has been utilised in the MR. for sealing the forged letter and the ornament box, both of which are later on produced as being sent by Rākṣasa to Candragupta. Thus in the MR. the sight of the Mudrā proves the identity leading to a catastrophe only to be averted by the vanity of Malayaketu.

The letter has again been used by Kālidāsa in the Mālavikāgnimitra and also in the Śākuntala. The one in the latter is only a love letter. It is only in the former that we have a letter of a political nature; but the letter in the MR. differs from this also in being a forged document to be used against the enemy himself, and thus to bring about a complete schism

between Malayaketu on the one hand and Rākṣasa and the other Mleccha allies on the other.

The use of the ornaments in the MR. easily reminds us of the ornaments in the Mṛcchakaṭika. Whereas in the latter we have one set of ornaments and a ratnāvalī, in the former we have two sets of ornaments—one of Parvateśvara and the other of Malayaketu ; and just as the ornaments in the latter, dropped down from under the arm-pit of Maitreya, decided the case against Cārudatta, similarly the ornaments dropped by Siddhārthaka in the fifth Act of the former convince Malayaketu of Rākṣasa's infidelity. Viśākhadatta's ingenuity, however, is realised when we see how he makes Rākṣasa (quite in keeping with his character) put on the ornament of Parvateśvara (of course, without knowing that it was so) and thus utilize that ornament as the last straw to crush all hopes of Rākṣasa by causing an irreparable rift between him and Malayaketu. The Mṛcchakaṭika, indeed, presents several parallels to the MR. , of which the scene when Rākṣasa is ultimately discomfited by the overwhelming evidence gathering against him even like Cārudatta and the scene at the impaling station in the last Act are the most striking.

It may thus be seen that Viśākhadatta got only the skeleton of his main theme from earlier works ; and that he has shown great skill in creating out of it a magnificent work of art, that the Mudrā-Rākṣasa admittedly is, not only by his deep study of Sanskrit poetics, metrics, and dramaturgy, but also by his intelligent study of earlier plays like those of Kālidāsa and Śūdraka without, however, being their slavish imitator.¹⁰

CHAPTER VI

VIŚĀKHADATTA AS A DRAMATIST

The *Mudrā-Rākṣasa* has neither a *Vidūṣaka*, the usual source of humour and laughter, nor a heroine. In fact there is only one female character in it—the pathetic wife of Candanadāsa. The usual attraction of a drama viz. the sentiment of love also is conspicuous by its absence in this play. And yet it is striking to note that out of the dry bones of a historical incident, which he received from sources available to him. Viśākhadatta has created a play which has a firm grip on the spectator from the beginning to the end. It may be interesting to see the ways and means devised by Viśākhadatta to achieve this purpose

And the first thing that we must note in this connection is the prologue. The importance of a good beginning and a good end in a work of art, and more particularly in a dramatic composition, can hardly be exaggerated. The first problem with a playwright is to attract the attention of his spectators and rouse their interest. This he has to do with his prologue which on that account has to be short, lucid, and to the point. It must also contain some matter which will attract the attention of the spectators. Nor is the end any way less important. The play must end before the spectator's interest begins to flag. He must be still in the world that he has been visualizing so far, when he leaves the theatre. Even a slight prolongation of the play beyond the proper moment will mar the impression made by the whole show. Viśākhadatta has not only begun his play well but has also taken care to bring it to a close at the proper moment. As we have already noticed the prologue of the MR. is just what a prologue should be and has served

its purpose well by imperceptibly leading the spectator into the very heart of the main plot. Nor is the end less artistic; for it comes as soon as all points of curiosity arising in the course of the play are explained.

But it is long way from the prologue to the *bharatavākya*; and the play-wright has very often to tax his ingenuity to keep up the interest of his spectators roused by the former continuously up to the latter. And the simplest means of doing this is variation in its different aspects. Monotony tends to bring on dullness, and has to be killed by variation. Alternation of Sanskrit by different Prakrits and that of prose by verse are too common to be discussed. Nor is the alternation of the usual medium viz. dialogue by messages, letters and documents, soliloquies and monologues any way less common. Viśākhadatta has made full use of all these types of variation in his play as can be observed even by a cursory glance through its pages. He has shown great skill in avoiding long speeches in his play. It may be seen how in Acts I and II he has made Cāṇakya and Rākṣasa pass several remarks and ask questions at intervals to their spies and thus saved his play from flowing along the channels of narrative prose. And he has done this artistically too, as is evident from the fact that the remarks of the ministers serve a purpose of their own as we have already observed it above. Another device used by Viśākhadatta in this connection is the use of letters and documents. Thus in Act III instead of himself giving a reply to Candragupta, Cāṇakya is made to utilise a document¹ for that purpose. Similarly a letter is used in Act V. It is evident that Viśākhadatta has used these just to avoid the unnaturalness of a character making a long speech on the stage and keeping others idle. But the real skill of our author lies in the naturalness with which these devices have been used. A message,² used in Act I and again in Act II, is again a similar device.

Soliloquies and monologues serve the same purpose. The

former as a general rule serves to reveal the true spirit or character of a dramatis persona and also serves to give the play a realistic appearance, provided, of course, it is not too long. Nothing can be more natural than that while discussing some matter with others or on hearing something from some one, a person should have some thought in his mind which he may not speak out at the moment. But it is these thoughts alone that reveal the true character of the person and often mould his future course of action. Soliloquy, however, would be tiresome if it is too long. Viśākhadatta has, therefore, used what are called monologues, which resemble soliloquies in being speeches by one person only, but differ from them in having the form of a dialogue between the person actually present on the stage and another imaginary person off the stage with the help of the device known as ākāśa-bhāṣita.³ This device not only kills monotony, but is also a good economic measure if but sparingly used. Viśākhadatta has resorted to this device in his MR. four times in the beginning of Acts I, II, III and VII.

Patākā-sthāna is yet another variation in the medium of thought used in a Sanskrit drama. A peculiar juxta-position of a person's words or thought with the words of another sometimes seems to foretell some future event. Such a peculiar phenomenon is in Sanskrit dramaturgy called patākā-sthāna. This phenomenon is often utilized by Sanskrit play-wrights for intriguing the spectators by the dramatic irony contained therein. Viśākhadatta has used this device thrice⁴ in the first Act and once⁵ again in Act IV ; and thereby suggested that Cāṇakya is ultimately to succeed in his aim, defeating and captivating Rākṣasa and Malayaketu ; and that Rākṣasa would be easily taken in by the plan hatched by him.

Having thus far studied the medium of thought and the different variations thereof used by Viśākhadatta we now pass on to a consideration of the order in which the several details

of the plot are presented to us. In history and ordinary narrations the order followed is mainly chronological. But in plays (and in fact all works of art) the chronological order has to give way to what may be styled as the artistic one. Much of a writer's success depends upon the presentation of the various details; and the same story may become attractive or otherwise according to the arrangement of its various details. In the MR. we are at once taken into the very heart of the theme by Cāṇakya when he reveals to us his plans in an outline reserving some details which are to be revealed in due course. Thus insult of Cāṇakya at the hands of the Nandas, his vow and alliance with Parvateśvara with a promise of half the Nanda territory, siege of Kusumapura, Sarvārthasiddhi leaving the capital only to be murdered by Cāṇakya's men in the penance-grove, Rākṣasa sending a poison-maiden to Candragupta, but Cāṇakya directing her to Parvateśvara who succumbs to her, Malayaketu frightened and going away from Kusumapura with Bhāguāyaṇa, Rākṣasa arranging several plans for getting rid of Candragupta and going away from the capital to form an alliance with Malayaketu, leaving his wife and children with Candanadāsa, Cāṇakya shrewdly arranging for Vairocaka going under the falling arch set up by Rākṣasa's man, frustration of all other plans of Rākṣasa through the vigilance of Cāṇakya and the death of the several accomplices of Rākṣasa by the very means which they intended to use against Candragupta—these are the events that have already taken place at the point where the play begins with the monologue of Cāṇakya. Viśākhadatta has shown his art in not only abandoning the chronological order of these events, but in introducing them all in the body of the play without the least tinge of artificiality. What would be more natural than that Cāṇakya should get from his spy the information of Rākṣasa having left his wife and children at the house of Candanadāsa before leaving Kusumapura? Again we see how

by making Cāṇakya boastfully refer to the insult he had had at the hands of the Nandas, and how he taking a vow to wreak vengeance fulfilled it single-handed, Viśākhadatta has not only supplied a previous incident so necessary for the understanding of the story but at the same time given some important trait in his character. Cāṇakya is again made to explain how and why Sarvārthasiddhi left the capital and why he got him murdered. The art of Viśākhadatta is again seen when we find him introducing several of the remaining details in the form of information gathered by Virādha Gupta and delivered to Rākṣasa in Act II. Similarly the fact of Parvateśvara succumbing to a poison-maiden has been revealed for the first time in Act I, and again brought in subsequently in Act II and IV. In connection with all these details it must be noted that they, one and all, have not only been introduced in a very natural manner, but are at the same time made to serve some useful purpose. Thus, for example, the revelation of the facts about the poison-maiden in Act II, besides informing the spectator of that important event has been utilised to bring out the shrewdness of Cāṇakya and also the appreciative nature of Rākṣasa; while the same again has been used to poison the mind of Malayaketu against Rākṣasa. Viśākhadatta, it may thus be evident, has shown great skill in taking the spectators directly into the heart of the plot and introducing all the previous details later on in the most natural manner.

The element of contrast renders great help to a dramatist in sustaining the interest of his spectators; and Viśākhadatta has not been slow to exploit it. Looking to the arrangement of the several sections in Act I we can realise how the lighter and the more serious sections are very skilfully intermingled therein. Thus the enticing prologue is followed by the more serious monologue of Cāṇakya which in its turn is followed by the lighter and partly humorous conversation between the spy and the pupil of Cāṇakya. Then follows the more seri-

ous narration the strain of which is slightly relieved by the occurrence of the *patākā-sthānas* ; but the interest is heightened by the revelation of some very important facts. The element of contrast is also observed in the arrangement of the various Acts. Thus Act II though resembling Act I in several respects presents a good contrast to it ; for whereas the latter reveals the full self-confidence of Cāṇakya and the success of some of his plans, the former is only a sad tale of a chain of failures of the several plans of Rākṣasa and reveals his lack of self-confidence and fatalism. Act III again brings before us the minister and the king, though loyal, loving and devoted to one another, pretending to be disaffected to the extent of severing connections. Act IV presents a good contrast by showing Malayaketu outwardly acting in a friendly manner towards Rākṣasa though in fact his mind is poisoned against him. Again Act III apparently shows a decline in the fortune of Cāṇakya though the fact is just otherwise ; while Act IV, though apparently showing Rākṣasa making for success, has yet taken him nearer his fall. Thus it may be seen that contrast is evident not only between two facts or incidents, but between the fact as it appears to be and the fact as it actually is. Viśākhadatta certainly deserves high praise for introducing this subtle aspect of contrast in his play, the aspect which is a common feature of the political world. It is again interesting to note how he has made his characters more definite and impressive on the basis of this element. We have already seen how Cāṇakya and Candragupta bear a good contrast to Rākṣasa and Malayaketu respectively. We have also noted how the treacherous Bhāgurāyaṇa is taken to be the most trustworthy person by Malayaketu who, however, misreads the most faithful Rākṣasa for an infidel. The element of contrast in the hands of Viśākhadatta has its own charming phases and proves a very effective measure for enhancing the interest of the spectators at every stage.

Another element that has contributed not a little towards Viśākhadatta's success is suspense. This in Act I are introduced the letter, the seal-ring of Rākṣasa and the ornaments of Parvateśvara by which Cāṇakya expects to catch Rākṣasa and Malayaketu. But at this stage we wonder how this would be accomplished. Again we watch with bated breath the conversation, or rather the wordy tug-of-war between Candanadāsa and Cāṇakya the end of which gives us to some extent the clue to the whole plan of the latter. The end of the Act also affords a fine illustration of this element when Cāṇakya says 'Sarveṣāṃ śivāḥ panthānaḥ santu' on learning from his pupil that Bhadrabhaṭṭa, Bhāgurāyaṇa, and others have absconded. In fact this element has been increasingly utilized by Viśākhadatta in his MR. Thus from the moment we realize that Malayaketu's mind is gradually being poisoned against the unsuspecting Rākṣasa we are in a suspense which is heightened when Malayaketu thoroughly prejudiced by the revelations in the earlier part of Act V sends for Rākṣasa only to be completely entangled in the whole affair. The highest pitch is perhaps reached by the end of the Act when Rākṣasa totally discomfited by the force of circumstances and to his great dismay realises that all his plans have resulted in the destruction, not of the enemies, but of his friends and allies only. At this stage we watch with great suspense the line of action that Rākṣasa would decide to follow. Viśākhadatta has, indeed exhibited great skill and ability in keeping this suspense at this height through the last two Acts of his play. Every moment we are per force kept watching with eagerness what Rākṣasa would do further ; we are relieved to learn that Rākṣasa decides to save Candanadāsa, but at the same time wonder how he would do it. The sight of his sword affords some relief only to be thwarted by the tale of the man ; and the relief that we get at the decision of Rākṣasa to surrender himself for Candanadāsa is only short-lived. For it gives rise

to an equally great suspense if not greater and we wonder whether Rākṣasa would choose to sacrifice his life and friend for his principle i.e. devotion to Nandas or vice versa ; and it is not until he declares 'Eṣa prahvo'smi' that we feel much relieved. But even here the sudden appearance of Bhadrabhaṭa and others together with captivated Malayaketu and Cāṇakya's leaving the whole affair to Rākṣasa creates some suspense, very mild of course, to be instantly relieved by the magnanimity shown by Rākṣasa. It would thus be realised that Viśākhadatta though affording some relief at various intervals and thus lowering the tension on the spectators, has at the same time cleverly managed to keep up the suspense at a high pitch without tiring their patience.

Now we pass on to the three unities. It is well-known that the idea of three unities as explained originally by the Greek writers has never been strictly adhered to by later play-wrights. The 'unity of action' is the only one to be universally realised as the most essential for any good play. The other two unities have been respected only in a modified form. A reference to the Daśarūpaka will show the unity of time and action have been recognised in Sanskrit in connection with an Act which, we are told, must deal with some incident or incidents forming one connected whole and taking place in one day.⁶ The third unity is neither referred to in works on dramaturgy nor observed by Sanskrit play-wrights in the strictest sense of the term. Turning to the MR. it may be observed that Viśākhadatta has carefully observed the unity of time by taking care to see that no act in his play represents action extending beyond the span of a day. He has also depicted one main point in each Act as can be seen from the names that he has given them ; and thus observed the unity of action also. As for place it must be noted that as far as possible Viśākhadatta has avoided any disconcerting change of place within an Act. Thus the scene in Act I is laid at the house of Cāṇakya in Pātali-

putra : while in Act III it is partly at the royal palace and partly at Cāṇakya's house in Pāṭaliputra, and the last two Acts represent action taking place partly in a street in Pāṭaliputra, partly in an old garden in its outskirts, partly at the place of execution, and partly at the royal palace. The scene of action in Acts II and IV is partly a street in Malayaketu's territory and partly Rākṣasa's dwelling therein, whereas the fifth Act represents action taking place partly in Malayaketu's camp, partly in a pavilion in the camp, and partly in Rākṣasa's dwelling there. Thus on the whole it may be seen that the place of action in the MR. as a whole falls into three broad sections viz. Pāṭaliputra, Malayaketu's capital, and Malayaketu's camp between the two and nearer to the former.⁷ This change in the place, however, does not mar the impression of unity of action and hence Viśākhadatta may be said to have observed the unity of place in this play.

Let us now analyse the time element in the MR. It has been already observed that no Act in the MR. represents action extending beyond the span of a day. Now we have to look to the play as a whole and find out the time that is required by the action that is actually represented on the stage and also the time that is required by plot at a whole. As for the former it may be observed that Viśākhadatta has used his ingenuity to present maximum amount of action possible within the available scope of the seven Acts of his play, partly by using stage directions and partly by a skilful arrangement of the various incidents. Thus, for example, when Cāṇakya expresses his desire to see Candanadāsa, his pupil at once goes out and comes again on the stage with Candanadāsa in no time. In fact all this would require some time according to the distance at which Candanadāsa is residing. But Viśākhadatta has brought all this within the compass of a minute with the stage direction 'Niṣkramiya candanadāsena saha praviśya' and thus saved so much time. Several, indeed, are the places

where Viśākhadatta has resorted to this device : but in this connection it should be noted that they, all but one, occur in Acts I, and V which are over-crowded with incidents. Act III has this only once, while the other Acts do not have it at all. The use of such a stage direction as an economic measure is rather artificial and hence mars the semblance of reality created by a play. Constant use of such a device may, therefore, be taken as a blemish in the art of a play-wright ; and Viśākhadatta has committed the sin of using it at least ten times.⁸ This defect, however, dwindles into insignificance when we look to the skill exhibited by him in arranging the several incidents in his play. Thus in Act IV, for example, we see how while Rākṣasa is trying to recall the mission on which he had sent Karabhaka, Malayaketu is shown going to see him, and how just when the latter reaches the place the former is made to remember the mission and put a question to Karabhaka. This is again used as an excuse for Malayaketu to wait outside, so that what follows is a bifocal scene with Malayaketu and Bhāgurāyaṇa on one side of the stage and Rākṣasa with Karabhaka and Śakaṭadāsa on the other. And as soon as Rākṣasa is alone Malayaketu enters and has his talk with him. The bifocal scene in Act V is yet another illustration of Viśākhadatta's skill in this respect. It is with these contrivances that Viśākhadatta has succeeded in giving us within the span of a period of a few hours incidents or action which in actuality would require a much longer period.

As for the time required by the whole plot of the MR. it should not be very difficult for us to determine it approximately on the strength of the various references to some particular dates and also the mention of a definite period having elapsed from a particular incident together with the mention of the same persons at one place in one Act and at another several miles apart in another. Of direct references to the actual date we have three ; one in Act I which speaks of the

possibility of the moon-eclipse⁹ on that day which, therefore, must be the full moon day ; another in Act III which speaks of the Day of the Kaumudī festival¹⁰ which is the full moon day of Kārtika ; and lastly in Act IV where the Kṣapaṇaka directly gives the full moon day¹¹ as the best day for starting the proposed expedition. Another pertinent reference in this connection we come across in a remark of Malayaketu when he declares that it was then ten months since his father died.¹² Side by side with these references we have to note that Siddhārthaka with Śakaṭadāsa has left Kusumapura on the very day on which the action in Act I takes place ; and it is perhaps on the same day again that Cāṇakya has sent somebody with the ornaments of Parvateśvara which he has secured through Viśvāvasu and his brothers. All these, it may further be remembered, are seen in Malayaketu's capital in Act II. Similarly the message¹³ sent by Rākṣasa from Malayaketu's land has reached Stavakalaśa before the feigned quarrel takes place in Act III. Again Karabhaka, sent by Stavakalaśa after the quarrel in Act III from Kusumapura, is seen in Malayaketu's land in the beginning of Act IV ; and Malayaketu and his army that start from their land at the end of Act IV¹⁴ are near Kusumapura in the beginning of Act V.¹⁵ And lastly Siddhārthaka and Rākṣasa who have left Malayaketu's camp at the end of Act V are in Kusumapura in Act VI ; and Malayaketu himself continuing his expedition at the end of Act V is brought a captive to Kusumapura before Candragupta in the end.¹⁶ The distance between Kusumapura and Malayaketu's capital is about a hundred yojanas and one would require at least ten to fifteen days to go from the former to the latter.¹⁷

There can be no doubt that the day of the action in Act III is the day of the Kaumudī-festival i.e. the full moon day of the month of Kārtika. Now allowing due time for Virādha-gupta to go from Rākṣasa to Kusumapura and find time to

convey Rākṣasa's word to Stavakalaśa we may take the action in Act II as taking place a fortnight earlier ; and that in Act I should be fortnight earlier still in view of the fact of Śakaṭadāsa and Siddhārthaka having come from Kusumapura (in Act I) to Rākṣasa (in Act II). Thus now the action in the first three Acts may be said to have taken place on the full moon day of Āśvina, the new moon day of the same month and the full moon day of the Kārtika respectively. A period of about a month must have elapsed between Acts III and IV and about a fortnight again between Acts IV and V, to allow Karabhaka to go from Kusumapura to Rākṣasa and also to allow Malayaketu's camp to move from his capital and be near Kusumapura. That Acts IV and V are separated by about a fortnight is again shown by the remark of Malayaketu that he has not seen Rākṣasa for a long time¹⁸ That the action in Act VII takes place on the same day as that in Act VI is shown by the remark of the puruṣa in Act VI viz. 'Adya tāvad vyāpādyate'.¹⁹ A gap of a day or two seems to be necessary between Acts V and VI in view of the fact that Siddhārthaka and Rākṣasa have come to Kusumapura from Malayaketu's camp which they have left at the end of Act V ; and also that the former has not only seen Cāṇakya but also (at his command) informed Candragupta of various incidents before he meets his friend Samiddhārthaka in the interlude in Act VI.²⁰ Thus it may be seen that the period of the Action covered by the drama actually extends from the full moon day of Āśvina to the end of Mārgaśīrṣa or thereabouts. But as we have already seen above there are various incidents which have already taken place before the action represented in Act I, and which are only narrated on the stage later on under various devices. From Malayaketu's remark in Act IV (the full moon day of Mārgaśīrṣa) that it was ten months since the death of his father we can conclude that Parvateśvara succumbed to the poison-maiden sometime about the

middle of Phālguna. But on Cāṇakya's own statement²¹ the death of Parvateśvara occurred some time after Sarvārthasiddhi had left the capital for tapovana only to be killed there by his men. It, therefore, follows that the siege of Kusumapura by Candragupta must have commenced about the middle of Mārgaśīrṣa, nearly two months before the death of Parvateśvara. And making due allowance for Cāṇakya to make strong preparations for this siege by catching hold of Candragupta and forming an alliance with Parvateśvara, we may reasonably hold that the incident of Cāṇakya being insulted by the Nandas must have taken place somewhere about the middle of Kārtika, the time of the Kaumudī festival. On the whole now we may conclude that the plot of the MR. (including the incidents that are merely introduced in the body of the play as matters of the past) covers a little over thirteen months from one Kaumudī festival approximately to about a month and a half after that very festival next year, though the incidents actually represented on the stage do not exceed a span of only about two months and half from the middle of Āśvina to the end of Mārgaśīrṣa.

Unity of action is perhaps the strongest point in the art of Viśākhadatta. Not that there are no minor episodes introduced by him in the MR.; but they are one and all kept strictly subservient to the main story. Thus, for example, there are the stories of Candanadāsa, Śakaṭadāsa and Malayaketu; but they, one and all, have been very cleverly interwoven with one another and again with the main story in such a way that they all together appear to form one story. Every incident and every thing that is introduced in the play ultimately leads to only one thing viz. the winning over of Rākṣasa by Cāṇakya. While reading the play at every point we feel as if we are witnessing a game at chess between two great experts who are moving their men with great fore-

thought with the ultimate aim of giving a crushing defeat to the opponent. Just as every move in such a play is only a part and parcel of the whole game, similarly in this play also each and every incident is only a part and parcel of the main theme viz. the contest between the two politicians. As the play proceeds Viśākhadatta has given a number of details one after another and also introduced several things which hardly seem to be connected with one another or even with the main theme. Thus in Act I are introduced the ornaments of Parvateśvara and we hardly suspect that they are going to play any important role in Cāṇakya's scheme. Similarly the ornaments of Malayaketu in Act II, the very ring of Rākṣasa, the feigned quarrel and the consequent split between Cāṇakya and Candragupta afford fine illustrations of the skill of Viśākhadatta so far as the unity of action is concerned. It is not until the fifth Act that Viśākhadatta stops spreading out the cob-web of things and events and begins to bring them together and lead them on to the denouement. If we look at the several Acts from the point of view of the development of the plot as leading to the ultimate aim, we may observe that Act I marks only the beginning where we get a good idea of the plans of Cāṇakya, but are yet ignorant of Rākṣasa's plans. Act II shows a deterioration in the situation of Rākṣasa whose prospects seem to grow brighter from the end of that Act upto the end of Act III. Act IV shows how though Rākṣasa feels that he is heading for success, certain other events are taking place without the knowledge of Rākṣasa which make his success doubtful in the eye of the spectators. Act V completely shatters the hopes of Rākṣasa and makes him think of saving his friend Candanadāsa. Thus the aim is partly achieved. It only remains now to convince Rākṣasa that there was no other way of saving his friend but to surrender—not only his own person, but even his main contention, his aim to remain faithful to his old masters even after their annihila-

tion—and accept the ministership of Candragupta. That done, Cāṇakya relinquishes his ministership in favour of Rākṣasa and ties his hair as a sign of the fulfilment of his vow.

This brings us to a consideration of the construction of the MR. according to Sanskrit works on dramaturgy. Viśākha-datta has shown his deep acquaintance with the dramatic technique at IV. 3 where he has compared the strain that a minister like Rākṣasa has to undergo with that of a good play-wright. According to this theory there are five artha-prakṛtis²² and an equal number of kāryāvasthās;²³ and a combination of these each to each serially gives rise to what are technically called the sandhis,²⁴ which also are, consequently, five in number. Thus the first sandhi, the mukha, is formed by a combination of bīja and ārambha.²⁵ In Act I Cāṇakya, after making a statement of his aim, has made a beginning of his plan; and fortunately enough has received from his spy the signet ring of Rākṣasa, an event which may be said to mark the beginning of the ultimate attainment of his aim by Cāṇakya. This portion of Act I forms the mukha-sandhi. Next in order is the pratimukha sandhi which combines in itself bindu and yatna.²⁶ This covers the rest of Act I where the narration of the spy apparently supervenes the main purpose which is revived by what follows. Thus the forging of the document with a mention of the ornaments therein, sending away of Siddhārthaka with the document and the seal ring with some important instructions kept secret at this stage, and the absconding of Bhadrabhaṭa and Bhāgurāyaṇa and others—all these are in fact so many links in the scheme of Cāṇakya to fetter Rākṣasa. Patākā and Prāptyāśā form the Garbha sandhi²⁷ which here covers the whole of Act II. The narration of Virādhagupta forms the patākā, which in this case appears again to throw into background the main purpose; while the prāptyāśā is found in II. 2 and the following sentence, and also in II. 8 and the speech of Rākṣasa that

precedes it. The next two Acts form the *Vimarśa sandhi*²⁸ which combines in itself *prakarī* and *niyatāpti*, which are to be found in Act III and the conversation between Rākṣasa and his spy in Act IV respectively. The last is the *nirvahaṇa sandhi*²⁹ which is *kārya* and *phalāgama* put together. This occurs in the remaining three Acts. Act V accomplishes the *avāntara kārya* viz. the *nigraha* of Malayaketu ; in the next Act is accomplished the main object viz. the winning over of Rākṣasa ; while the last Act brings about the fruit most ardently wished for by Cāṇakya viz. making Rākṣasa accept Candragupta's ministership and thus making the latter's position secure and firm. It may be remarked here that Viśākhadatta's play may be pointed out as one of the finest illustrations of the Sanskrit dramatic technique.³⁰

We have now to note one more measure of economy that has been adopted by Viśākhadatta in his MR. and thus succeeded in creating a cobweb of entangling situations calculated to keep up the interest of the spectator all through the play. It is the introduction of some very important things in the most innocent manner and making them serve several purposes one after another and pass through several hands. Thus in Act I is introduced the signet ring of Rākṣasa by making the spy hand it over to Cāṇakya with full information about it. It is used there again to seal a letter which is to be later on used against Rākṣasa, and is then through Siddhārthaka made to pass into the hands of Rākṣasa who is made to give it to his friend and writer Śakaṭadāsa with an instruction to use it in all further transactions. Before giving it to Rākṣasa, however, Siddhārthaka is made to use it to seal the ornament received by him from the latter. Thus the ring is used for the purpose of setting a seal to the letter and the ornament-box, both of which later on serve as evidence against Rākṣasa himself. It has thus an interesting journey of its own in Acts I II and V. The ornaments of Parvatēśvara come next. They

are introduced, (but not actually produced and shown on the stage), in Act I very innocently again inasmuch as at that time we are hardly conscious of the great disaster that they are going to bring upon Rākṣasa in Act V. The very fact that Cāṇakya has sent Brāhmaṇas of his acquaintance to receive them from Candragupta and asked them to see him with them, does give rise to a feeling that they are to form part of Cāṇakya's machinery ; but we do not realize their importance at this stage. Thus the ornaments naturally fall into the possession of Candragupta after the demise of Parvateśvara ; and from him through Viśvāvasu and his brothers they go to Cāṇakya who arrange to send them to Malayaketu's land only to be bought by Śakaṭadāsa for Rākṣasa whose fall they are to bring ultimately. These ornaments also we see passing through several hands and serving different purposes in Acts I, II, and V. Nor are the ornaments of Malayaketu any way less important from the dramatic point of view. In Act II Malayaketu is made to send the ornaments from his own person to Rākṣasa as a sign of friendship with a pressing request that Rākṣasa should put on the same. It is towards the end of the same Act that Rākṣasa is made to part with it in his ecstasy at the rescue of his dear friend Śakaṭadāsa from the clutches of Cāṇakya and the jaws of death. Siddhārthaka is, however, made to seal the same with the ring of Rākṣasa himself then in his possession and deposit it in the treasury of Rākṣasa himself with a plausible excuse. It is later on in Act V that we see Siddhārthaka moving out with this ornament-box with Rākṣasa's seal and trying to go out to Kusumapura apparently on an errand of Rākṣasa, but without a passport. Naturally, therefore, he is caught and produced before Bhāguraṇa who cross-examines him. Siddhārthaka then cleverly drops the ornament-box which is naturally construed by Malayaketu in the light of a statement in the letter recovered from him. In spite of Rākṣasa's explanation Malayaketu is

firmly convinced that Rākṣasa was sending the ornament to Candragupta as a present accompanying the letter. The importance of the letter forged by Cāṇakya through Śakaṭadasa can hardly be exaggerated. For it is this letter that turns the whole scale against Rākṣasa by thoroughly prejudicing Malayaketu's mind against him, and making Malayaketu construe other matters also differently in that light. This letter when it is read out in Act V throws a flood of light on the whole plan of Cāṇakya to cause a split between Malayaketu on the one hand and Rākṣasa and his other Mleccha allies on the other ; and we are struck by the keen insight commanded and displayed by Cāṇakya in devising this plan almost on the spur of the moment in Act I.

From the point of view of stage-craft we have to note in the MR. three different factors viz. stage directions, sudden shifting of scenes from one place to another, and the bifocal scenes. The stage directions refer not only to the speeches which may be svagata, prakāśa or janāntika,³¹ nor again to the entrance or exit of dramatis personae or the manner of their entrance or appearance on the stage, but even to the facial expressions and other signs such as the throbbing of the left eye. Some also refer to some noise behind the curtain. With these stage directions one will be justified in concluding that the play is meant to be acted on the stage ; and this conclusion finds confirmation in the very opening sentence in the prologue. They also show that the stage had a curtain (screening the tiring room) which could be tossed aside³² for the purposes of hurried entrance by a character on the stage, and also another short curtain called javanikā with a window-like hole in it.³³ This latter appears to have been moveable so that a person could stand screened by it as long as he wanted, but could set it aside at will and appear on the stage.³⁴

More than once in the MR. we see the scene of action shifting suddenly from one place to another. Thus in Act III, for

example, we find the scene shifting from the sugāṅga palace to the abode of Cāṇakya, and from there again back to the palace. Similarly in Act V it shifts from Malayaketu's place to Rākṣasa's abode there, and then back again to Malayaketu's place. Such sudden shifts in immediate sequence can be represented on the stage with the help of curtains only. Thus it follows that beside the nepathya and the javanikā, the Indian stage was also equipped with one or two more curtains which could be dropped or lifted according to the requirements of the play.³⁵

The bifocal scenes pre-suppose a still further development in stage-craft. Thus in Act IV, for example, we see how while Rākṣasa is holding conversation with Virādhagupta in this abode, Malayaketu and Bhāgurāyaṇa standing outside are over-hearing them and passing remarks on what they hear. A similar scene occurs in Act V also with Bhāgurāyaṇa on one side and Malayaketu and Kṣapaṇaka on the other. In such cases the spectators are expected to witness all the persons on the stage (i.e. those inside as well as those outside): but the persons on one side are not expected to see or hear the persons on the other side, and vice versa. Hence it follows that the stage must have been divided into two parts (right and left) both facing the spectators and separated from each other by a curtain. The stage in Ancient India thus appears to have been fairly well developed and equipped with curtains for different purposes.

We now close this chapter by making a few observations about Viśākhadatta as a poet. It is clear that he can never rise to the height and sublimity of Kālidāsa or Bhavabhūti. In prose as well as in poetry his is a laboured style, more befitting a scientific than a literary work. His prose abounds in technical terms, expressions, and ideas; and though free from very lengthy sentences, or involved constructions, is yet full of compounds of varying length. His poetry is more artificial

still and hence more difficult also. This defect he has tried to make up by the width and depth of his scholarship, using a large number of alamkāras like upamā, rūpaka, utprekṣā, śleṣa, arthāntara-nyāsa, aprastuta-praśaṁsā and samāsokti. He has also used a large variety of metres ranging from the aṇuṣṭubh to the sragdharā (among the samavṛttas), only two among the viṣama vṛttas viz. the mālāyabhāriṇī and the puṣpitāgrā, and the vipulā and the pathyā varieties of the āryā meter. In this connection it may be observed that Viśākhadatta in the MR. has shown a partiality for the lengthy metres like the sragdharā and the śārdūla-vikrīḍita. Befitting the laboured style he has often drawn on nyāya, arthaśāstra, nāṭya and jyotiḥ-śāstra for his similes and metaphors, and in several cases indulged in śleṣa which becomes boresome when reduced to a mere word jugglery. Viśākhadatta's style is rugged and forceful on the whole; and he can hardly rank among the best Sanskrit poets with his occasional tautologies, and forced double entendre, though he may easily be admitted to stand very high among the stars of the second magnitude in the galaxy of Sanskrit play-wrights.

CHAPTER VII

SOCIETY AS DEPICTED IN THE MUDRĀ-RĀKSASA

In an admittedly political play like the MR. it is but impossible to find a full reflection of the society in all its aspects. But at the same time it is a matter of general experience that no literary work of any value can be thoroughly devoid of any glimpses of the contemporary state of society. We may, therefore, make an attempt here on the basis of the glimpses available in the MR. to depict the social, religious and political conditions obtaining in the day of Viśākhadatta.

Caste-system was not only fully developed but even had a thorough hold on the society. The Brāhmaṇas were held in high esteem and respect by the rest of the society. On festive and religious occasions they were invited for dinner and given good dakṣiṇā. At obsequial rites the ornaments and other things belonging to the departed souls were given to them as religious gifts. Some Brāhmaṇas were well up in politics and other śāstras and worked as ministers or even spies. Others were learned in the Vedic lore only ; and as a rule were notorious for their illegible hand.¹ The Kāyastha, on the other hand, was noted for beautiful hand-writing, though he seems to have carried little weight in the sphere of politics.² The Vaṇik was generally noted for his cupidity, and amassed vast amount of wealth. When however occasion demanded it, he was also prepared to stake every thing belonging to him—nay even his wife and children. For the sake of a friend he would undergo any risk ; and would even consign himself to fire or hang himself to death just to avoid hearing the harrowing news of a friend's execution. The worse side of the caste-system, however, is seen when we find that untouchability is

also present and that Caṇḍālas (and presumably persons of some other classes also) are regarded as untouchable.³

Religious sacraments and observances are also casually referred to in our play. Thus on festival days or on religious occasions like the moon-eclipse it was customary to ask Brāhmaṇas to dinner and give them dakṣiṇā. Religious rites were also performed with reference to the departed relatives and even friends and allies, though sometimes such rites were deferred with a view to wreak vengeance on the wrong-doer.⁴ At such obsequial rites it was customary to give away to learned Brāhmaṇas the ornaments and other belongings of the deceased. Importance of religious gifts was generally recognized so much so that a man before immolating himself often gave away all his wealth to the poor.⁵

The custom of anumaraṇa seems to have been fairly common. Friends often consigned themselves to fire or hanged themselves to death for the sake of a friend whom they could render no active help in his worst calamity. In spite of what Kālidāsa and Bāṇa have said against this custom of anumaraṇa, even women had recourse to this expedient in the full belief that to follow the husband in his death (or negatively, not to desert him at the point of death) is only a duty of a true wife.⁶ Nay anumaraṇa is nothing short of ātmānugraha.⁷ One consideration which might prevail against this course is only a young helpless child. But there seem to have been cases where even this consideration carried no weight.⁸ This custom does not, however, seem to have been compulsory for all; and hence we find Malayaketu's mothers not immolating themselves and continuing to live even after the death of his father. It is perhaps likely that the custom was prevalent more among the Āryas than among the Mlecchas.

Nothing is known from the play as regards the forms of marriage prevailing at that time. But from a simile⁹ in Act I it appears that a married woman was expected to be very

quietly and modestly waiting on her husband and the elderly persons of the family. Re-marriage seems to be allowed within the gotra or family of the deceased husband on certain conditions for all classes of people, and it was only women of low classes or character that transgressed this rule and took the liberty of marrying even outside the gotra of their deceased husband.¹⁰

Nor are theistic ideas wanting in our play. God Śiva holding both the Ganges and the śaśikalā on his head is described as indulging in a crooked speech with his wife, the simple Pārvaṭī.¹¹ Another stanza¹² describes his body smeared with bhasma, covered in elephant's hide, and decked with a garland of skulls. God Viṣṇu also is described as just waking up in his serpent bed, his eyes reddish and only half opened ;¹³ while the Varāha incarnation of the same god is referred to in the bharata-vākya.¹⁴ People generally paid obeisance to the new moon,¹⁵ and the sun also was an object of worship.¹⁶

Partly credulous is the idea of the God of Death and his paṭa. Man can live only through his favour ; for it is he who snatches away the lives of all, even those of the devotees of other deities.¹⁷ Yamapaṭa is used as a means of livelihood even as we find it sometimes used even to-day. This only shows how people then had strong though credulous belief in the accounts of the tortures of hell described in purāṇas and vividly painted in the yamapaṭa. Yama was helped in his work by Citragupta who kept a record of all the persons whose lives are to be snatched away.¹⁸

Of the heterodox system only two are referred to in the play. Buddhism seems to have been in a flourishing condition and enjoying a general approval. The conduct of a Buddha was looked upon as being remarkably above reproach—nay even worthy of approbation.¹⁹ Jainism also was fairly spread ; though it does not seem to enjoy the same honour and respect as its compeer. The sight of a kṣapaṇaka was considered an

ill omen.²⁰ The main reason for this prejudice, however, seems to be the loathsome sight (*bībhatsa darśana*) that he presented, so much so that if he did not present a loathsome sight his appearance was not so much detested.²¹ On the whole, however, people seem to have imbibed a spirit of tolerance towards of all sects—a fact which generally may be said to be the badge of Hinduism, as can be inferred from the fact that even a *kṣapaṇaka* could not only be a servant and friend of a *Brāhmaṇa* minister, but be even his spy.

Various credulous beliefs also are found to be prevailing. The moon-eclipse, it was believed, was caused by the wicked *graha* Ketu overpowering (and swallowing) the moon.²² Feeding *Brāhmaṇas* on such occasions was considered as a religious duty. The idea of ill omens also was present. Thus the sight of a serpent,²³ or that of a *Kṣapaṇaka* was considered inauspicious. The same was the case with the throbbing of the left eye.²⁴ Another such credulity is represented in the MR. by what is known as a *patākā-sthāna*.²⁵ The occurrence of several of these in the MR. and the remarks on those occasions passed by persons like *Cāṇakya* and *Rākṣasa* may easily be admitted as being suggestive of the belief of the generality of people in their prophetic powers.²⁵

Among the family relations the wife was very loving and dutiful towards her husband. She gave her husband a hearty send off when he set out on a journey, and returned home after seeing him off upto a certain distance. During his absence from home she naturally looked after the household and her children. When, however, the husband was going out never to return (as when being led to the impaling station) she would not return home. She would rather keep him company even in his death leaving even her young children to the care of the Almighty.²⁶ This course, however, was not followed by all ; and in the MR. also we see the mothers of *Malaya-ketu* continuing to live even after their sad bereavement, pos-

sibly with a desire to see with their own eyes their son avenging the wrong perpetrated by the enemy. Nor was the husband less loving or dutiful. Before going away from home he would, if necessary, arrange for the safety of his wife (and also children), and sometimes would even keep them with a friend. Though himself in adverse circumstances he would try to console and cheer up his wife and also to dissuade her from immolating herself at least for the sake of the children if for nothing else. The father as a rule cared for the welfare of his children ; and if he chanced to meet an unusual kind of death, he would be always careful to impress on the mind of his son that he was meeting his end not for any fault of his, but for some noble cause. Character was the most important thing in his eye ; and his one desire was that his children should not think of him as a moral wreck. The son, on the other hand, was all respect for the father, and was also obedient to him. Naturally he would feel quite helpless at the idea of his going to meet an untoward end ; and would request him, if possible, to give him some last piece of guidance and advice, particularly as to what he should do thereafter. He would, of course, be all pride at the idea that his father has been upright all his life through and was sacrificing himself in the cause of a friend ; and would take it as a family vow. It is needless to add that mother was loving towards her children and served as a guide to him, particularly in the absence of her husband. When, however, caught between the Scylla and the Charibdis of two duties (that to her husband and that to her children) she would care more for the former and leave the children to the care of gods.

More important still is a friend whose touch-stone is adversity. Very few indeed, are there who would even care to see a person in his adversity, much less speak to him a few consoling words or render any active help²⁷ Others merely shed tears finding themselves unable to render any active help.²⁸

But truer friends would undergo any risk for the sake of a friend. They would remain faithful even at the risk of losing not only their wealth, or wife and children, but even their life.²⁹ It is no wonder then if one left one's wife and children in the house of such a friend before undertaking a serious task involving great risk. Friends, particularly when meeting after a long period of separation, naturally enough expressed their love and concern for one another and, sometimes even went to the length of blaming one another for causing delay.³⁰ This blame is, after all, only more apparent than real; and soon the friends plunged into deeper matters acquainting one another with the important matters and events that they might have come to know during the period of separation. Some friends are so very loving and tender-hearted that they simply can't bear the idea of having to hear the harrowing news of the execution of a friend; and to avoid it, therefore, would either consign themselves to fire or hang themselves to death.³¹

Sometimes a friend might unwittingly do something which would bring a person into trouble, and thus create a misunderstanding about himself and his fidelity in the eye of that person. The more fortunate ones³² among such friends may live to see the fog lifted; but the less fortunate ones³³ might succumb to the evil effects of the misunderstanding without getting any chance of clearing themselves. Faithless friends, however, are not wanting. Outwardly such persons profess to be good friends and are sweet-tongued, so that they are hardly suspected to be otherwise than what they appear to be. But it is such so-called friends alone that by their alluring speeches and talks often mislead a person and lead him to his ruin.

There is nothing striking if a man risks his all—even his life—for a friend who has shown his friendship by similar actions. But the more magnanimous type of friend would go a step further and even forgive the insults and injuries inflicted on him by a former friend and ally, now turned into an enemy.³⁴

Servants, as a general rule, appear to have been more faithful than otherwise to their original masters, though they may also be found to act treacherously to the masters in whose employ they put themselves under some pretext or the other. They are in all matters so completely subservient to their masters that they can't even make a free use of their sense-organs, and very often have to stifle their conscience.³⁵ Naturally therefore, several of them seem to be devoid of any conscience whatever, though there are a few who are yet subject to the pricking of their conscience, which, of course, they are obliged to suppress in view of their servitude. A servant, it seems, could have no sense of self-respect, and had to do any thing or assume any role—even the meanest one—in implicit obedience to his master's will.³⁶ A dog's living is, indeed, a synonym for service in Sanskrit.³⁷

Masters were, no doubt, very often quite considerate and even kind to their servants. But some masters like Cāṇakya were more feared than loved. Masters were not, however, wanting, who were soft-hearted and would be touched to the quick at the sad plight of their servants. They were also generous and gave away presents to their servants for bringing some glad tidings or doing some good service.

One more relation of which we catch a glimpse in the MR. is that between the teacher and the taught. The latter was generally all respect for the former; and had great regard for his learning.³⁸ He gave implicit obedience to his preceptor and in return received vidyā from him. There are, however, certain cases where disciples paid scant courtesy to their preceptors and insulted them.³⁹ though good pupils like Candragupta would look upon such an action as a grave crime.⁴⁰ The preceptor, on the other hand, seems to have had full control over his disciple, who often stayed with him. Naturally he would rather be short-tempered with his disciple, though some of his kind, being conscious of their defect, tried

to check themselves and appeared apologetic whenever they happened to fall a prey to it.⁴¹

We don't get a clear idea of the various professions followed in those days. But we find the play referring to some of them viz. Yamapaṭa, serpent-play, astrology, medicine, and so on. The idea about these that we get from the play does not differ much from what we know of them even to-day. The same may be said about festivals in general as can be inferred from what we know of the Kaumidī festival.

Flesh-eating was common ; and flesh was regularly sold in shops.⁴² Drinking was looked upon as a vice, but at public festivals or on feastive occasions people seem to have indulged in wine to some extent. Woman and hunting are vices and were generally avoided by the people. Royal servants in particular had to be above all these vyasanās ; and those who were found addicted to any of these were liable to be punished.⁴³

The play is steeped in a political atmosphere all through, and we not only come across several technical terms of politics but even a very large number of political ideas as also a good deal of information about kings, ministers, and spies in particular.

The king was an absolute monarch, and had full control over his subjects. Some kings, however, did not look to the administration themselves, but left it wholly to their ministers⁴⁴ and remained engrossed in enjoyment and festivals. Such kings naturally were completely dependent on their ministers, so much so that they were at times even insulted by the latter in case they questioned the accuracy or advisability of the course that was being followed. Under these circumstances the kings had either to swallow the insult or punish the overbearing ministers. In fact the king could not only dismiss his minister but even sentence him to death,⁴⁵ though the latter course was only sparingly adopted. More generally

perhaps the affairs of the state were conducted by the king in consultation with his minister. From the point of view of his relation with his minister thus the king was either *svāyattasiddhi*, *sacivāyattasiddhi*, or *ubhayāyattasiddhi*.

The commands of a king were proclaimed at various places (called *ghoṣaṇāsthānas*) and were implicitly obeyed.⁴⁶ Even the slightest disrespect shown to his command was sure to rouse his indignation, and bring ruin on the culprit. As a general rule the king was devoted to the well-being of his subjects; and in return expected from them nothing but full loyalty.⁴⁷ Some kings, no doubt, were covetous and cared more for the wealth of their subjects than any thing else. *Rājāpathya*, however, was in any case a very serious offence and would bring total annihilation on its perpetrator. Everybody therefore avoided *rājāpathya* (treason in general) at least to save himself and his family, if for nothing else.⁴⁸ A king's lot, however, was not considered to be very enviable, particularly if he would be a king in the real sense of the term.⁴⁹

If the king was the first member of the state (*pradhāna prakṛti*), the minister was the next in order. In practice sometimes he was all in all, particularly when the king remained completely indifferent to the affairs of the state. But even when the king was quite alive to his duties as a king, the minister had his own importance and responsibilities, so much so that it was he who was held generally responsible for any wrong committed by the king.⁵⁰ He was, therefore, as a rule expected to be not only shrewd and brave but also, above all, loyal⁵¹ to his king; and it was not quite easy to find a person endowed with all these qualities. The idea that kings were often swayed by their ministers is hinted at by *Viśākhadatta* by comparing the former with elephants or serpents and the latter with mahats or snake-catchers.⁵² Ministers were expected to be upright and disinterested, though some fell very

short of their requirements and did nothing better than lavishing eulogies on their lord and bread-giver.⁵³

The fate of the state depended not merely on the king, nor again merely on the abilities of the minister, but on both, on their mutual and hearty co-operation and confidence. How-so-ever clever a minister may be, he is sure to be defeated in his aims and undertakings if he finds himself associated with an unworthy prince. Mutual distrust between the king and his minister always results in a political breakdown of the state ; while mutual confidence will lead even less talented ministers to success.⁵⁴ Thus inspite of the absolute monarchy that apparently was the rule of the day, it seems to have been held that the king should follow the rājadharmas and do every thing in consultation with his ministers.

Spies are often described as the eyes of the king, and are of great use and importance in the political world. A spy was expected to be adept in languages of the different parts of the country and expert in assuming various disguises.⁵⁵ This was but natural because he was required to go to different parts of the land and gather information by moving among various kinds of people. He generally assumed such disguises as would enable him to have a free access to any place, even that of a minister, and would at the same time be above all suspicion. And the best disguises seem to have been those of a snake-catcher, a yāmapaṭṭika, or a religious mendicant—even budhist or jain—or an astrologer who had access to all houses and could talk to all sorts of people high and low. In spite of the detailed instructions that they received from their employers, the spies had often to use their own ingenuity and decide the course of action to be followed on the spur of the moment. They were, therefore, required to be men of good calibre. At times spies were required to get themselves employed in the service of the enemy and do their work very cautiously, sometimes even at the risk of their own lives. The slightest mis-

take on the part of a spy in such cases would not only cost his life, but even frustrate the whole plan of his master and bring destruction on the state. Thus we see that spies had to play a very active part in the political world by wandering through different people under various disguises and gathering information, or by getting into the services of the enemy in different departments and waiting for an opportune moment to carry out the instructions of their master. Implicit obedience and staunch fidelity were strictly expected from the spies and any one showing the slightest sign to the contrary ran the risk of being sentenced to death.

Punishments seems to have been very severe—nay cruel. Flogging was common and was generally resorted to for extorting confessions from a culprit and also for wringing the required information from him. Confiscation of all the belongings, imprisonment together with wife and children, and expulsion were the usual punishments for a person suspected of sedition. Nor is capital punishment less common. It generally was awarded in the form of impalement; but in particular cases it took the form of poisoning,⁵⁶ burning or burying alive,⁵⁷ or tying to the feet of an elephant.⁵⁸ A person sentenced to death was led to the vadhya-sthāna dressed in red garments with a garland of red flowers and the śūla on his neck⁵⁹ through the main street of the town proclaiming at several places the crimes committed by him and also the punishment awarded to him. Offenders could as a general rule be ransomed with large amounts of money; but this was not allowed in the case of persons accused of sedition, who could secure their release only by proving by their action that they were not seditious.⁶⁰ Recluses and monks seem to have been exempted from capital punishment, the highest punishment in their case being expulsion from the land with disgrace. All punishments were given by the minister, but the capital punishment seems to have been a special prerogative of the

king⁶¹ even when he has left the whole administrative affair to his minister. On festive occasions all prisoners were released unconditionally.⁶²

The army consisted of four parts, elephants, cavalry, chariots and infantry. Of these, however, the first two seem to have been more highly valued than the others.⁶³ These together with territory and treasure formed the strength of a king; and hence it is these that these were always coveted and prized more than any thing else.⁶⁴ The sword and the bow seem to have been the most common weapons of war; and a coat of mail was also common. The art of war-fare was not restricted to this or that particular class; and even Brāhmaṇas appear to be quite well up in it. They even at times led an expedition themselves.⁶⁵ The Mlecchas on the whole seem to have been held in a low esteem by the Āryas,⁶⁶ though alliance between the Āryas and the Mlecchas appears to be quite common. Defeated monarchs were taken captives before the victorious kings who sometimes took a lenient view and ordered them to be released or even re-instated. But as a general rule it would appear that the principalities of such princes were annexed to that of the victor; and even when the former were allowed to retain them, their position would be only subordinate to the latter.

Among the flora and fauna our play mentions only the lion,⁶⁷ the elephant—particularly its two varieties vyāla⁶⁸ and ekacara,⁶⁹ the honey-making bees,⁷⁰ the sārasa,⁷¹ the haṁsa⁷² and the pea-cock.⁷³ The geographical references⁷⁴ in the play include Cīna, Kulūta, Sindhudeśa, Malaya, and Kāśmīra in addition to the city of Pāṭaliputra, the mountain Himālaya,⁷⁵ the rivers Śoṇa⁷⁶ and the Gaṅgā,⁷⁷ and the Southern ocean.⁷⁸ Besides the Hūṇas we find Śakas, Śabaras, Khaśas, Gāndhāras, and Yavanas⁷⁹ mentioned by Viśākhadatta and referred to by the general term Mleccha, which would appear to have been applied to all foreigners in general. The concluding stanza of

the play tells us that the prince, during whose reign it was composed, had rescued the earth from the scourge of the Mleccha, who had been harrassing it time and again.⁸⁰

After this broad survey of the state of society as depicted in the MR. a few words must be said to do away with the misunderstanding that the MR. depicts a state of society marked by low morality. Such a conclusion regarding the state of society in general is vitiated by the fact that MR. is mainly a political play, and whatever morally objectionable actions have occurred therein, have one and all occurred in the sphere of politics only. It is, therefore, wrong on the basis of these actions to draw any conclusions regarding the society in general outside the sphere of politics. If, on the other hand, we look to the other incidents and characters outside the political atmosphere and also the thoughts and actions entertained by the politicians themselves in their private and individual capacities we find the code of morality certainly very enviable. Fidelity loyalty, truthfulness, firmness, sincerity, love and fellow-feeling, and the spirit of self-sacrifice are the qualities noticeable in almost every character high or low. Even those who have displayed the qualities of cruelty, treachery, infidelity, ingratitude, falsehood and forgery have done so only out of some political reasons, and not for their private or personal gain or animosity. Even these characters. it must be noted, in their personal capacities, divested of their political responsibilities and purposes have shown a high standard of morality as can be easily seen from the fact that minister of the position of Cāṇakya lived in but a poor hut, and refused to bend even before the sovereign ;⁸¹ that a spy like Bhāgurāyaṇa feels the sting of his conscience that he has to act treacherously towards the fully confiding Malayaketu ;⁸² that an ordinary spy like Samiddhārthaka is enraged at the idea that he should be asked to commit the heinous act of murdering a good man like Candanadāsa,⁸³ that a poor spy like Siddhār-

thaka should faithfully hand over the signet ring of Rākṣasa to his master Cāṇakya without being tempted to melt it for himself ;⁸⁴ that Rākṣasa, so cruel in devising various means to get Candragupta murdered, should be touched to the quick by the sad plight of Virādhagupta ;⁸⁵ that he again should show high appreciation of the worth of his very rival ;⁸⁶ that even Cāṇakya, hard-hearted and devoid of any emotion as he is, should insist on his accepting the ministership of Candragupta, and should relinquish it in his favour ;⁸⁷ or that Rākṣasa should desire that Malayaketu should be released in view of their past friendship inspite of his misconduct.⁸⁸ Instances like these which can be easily multiplied by a perusal of the play, should be enough to brush aside any misconception about the moral level of the society of the day of the MR. And the impression gathered by these and such other instances is greatly heightened when we take into consideration the virtues displayed by Candanadāsa, his wife and son, Viṣṇudāsa and Śa-kaṭadāsa. About the use of questionable means in the sphere of politics and the standard of morality revealed thereby it must be stated that even the twentieth century civilization with all its boastfulness can't afford to look down upon the ancient civilization with contempt. Can we not find a series of instances equally (at least, if not more) objectionable in the pages of the history of modern times? What century and what land can boast (with truth) of its politics being thoroughly above such blemishes? Power-politics is sure to abound in such and even more blameworthy actions and events irrespective of the civilization and moral standard of the society as a whole, at least so long as politicians are politicians first and human beings afterwards.



NOTES

1 cf. राक्षसः—विष्णुगुप्त, न मां चाण्डालस्पर्शदूषितं स्पृष्टुमर्हसि ।

चाणक्यः—भो अमात्यराक्षस, नेमौ चाण्डालौ । अयं खलु दृष्ट एव भवता
सिद्धार्थको नाम राजपुरुषः । योऽप्यसौ द्वितीयः सोऽपि
समिद्धार्थको नाम राजपुरुषः एव । pp. 186 & 188. *

2 The honorific titles तत्रभवत् and भगवत् are applied to the
ब्राह्मण by both the नटी as well as the सूत्रधार. See p. 4.

3 It may be noted that भवभूति and भट्टनारायण, who were ब्राह्मण
by caste, have no विदूषक in their plays.

4 cf. B. C. Law Volume, Part I, p. 51 n. Also see Pandit,
The Signet Ring, p. 183 f.

5 cf. Dhruva, Intr. p. xxi, n. 9.

6 cf. Dhruva, Intr. p. vii and n. 3.

7 e. g. Prof Taranath and M. R. Kale. Prof. S. Ray also
adopts this reading but identifies the king with चन्द्रगुप्त II of the
गुप्त dynasty. K. T. Telang adopts this reading in the text, but
seems to be inclined in his introduction to favour the reading
अवन्तिवर्मा.

8 e. g. Dhruva, Jacobi, Macdonell and Rapson.

9 cf. Dhruva, Intr. p. viii.

80 cf. Indian Antiquary, XL, pp. 265 ff.

11 cf. The Journal of The Mythic Society, 1923, pp. 616 f.

12 cf. For these see Dhruva, Intr. p. vii.

13 cf. Keith, p. 204 and n. 1.

14 cf. I. 20 with the preceding remark of चाणक्य.

15 cf. Dhruva, Intr., n. 32.

19 cf. बुद्धानामपि चेष्टितं सुचरितैः क्लिष्टं विशुद्धात्मना ।

* The page-referances are to Prof. Deodhar and Bedekar
edition of the मुद्रा-राक्षस.

17 cf. म्लेच्छैरुद्विज्यमाना भुजयुगमधुना संश्रिता राजमूर्तेः ।

18 cf. Krishn., p. 606, n. 8.

19 cf. Telang, Intr. p. 21 f.

20 Śīsupālavadha I 47. is adduced as parallel to मु० रा० vii. 21.

21 The prologue, the scene between राक्षस and मलयकेतु in Act V, the scene at the place of execution easily remind us of the prologue, the trial scene, and the scene at the place of execution in the मृच्छकटिक. It may be interesting to pursue this topic in fuller details.

22 Bibliotheca Indica (Hall) 1865, p. 62. But the NSP. edition adopts the other reading.

23 See Krishn., para 632.

24 See Krishn., para 632. For an account of several of these, Read Dr. Raghavan, मुद्राराक्षसकथा, Intr. pp. 51 ff.

25 cf. तत् त्रिविष्टपमाख्यातं तन्वद्भ्या यद् बलित्रयम् ।
येनानिमेषदृष्टित्वं नृणामप्युपजायते ॥ No 1548.
सेन्द्रचापैः श्रिता मेघैर्निपतन्निर्झरा नगाः ।
वर्णकम्बलसंवीता वभुर्मत्तद्विपा इव ॥ 1728.

26 I. 46.5 and I. 3.5.

27 cf. तत्र बृहत्कथामूलं मुद्राराक्षसम्—

चाणक्यनाम्ना तेनाथ शकटालगृहे रहः ।
कृत्यां विधाय सहसा सपुत्रो निहतो नृपः ॥
योगानन्दे यशःशेषे पूर्वैनन्दमुतस्ततः ।
चन्द्रगुप्तः कृतो राजा चाणक्येन महौजसा ॥

इति बृहत्कथायां सूचितम् । p. 34.

It may be noted here that these stanzas actually occur in the बृहत्कथामञ्जरी of क्षेमेन्द्र who, is admittedly later than धनिक, the author of the दशरूपवलोक.

28 cf. Dhruva, Intr. p. xix f.; and Haas, Intr. to दशरूपक, p. xxiii.

29 cf. B. C. Law Volume, Part I, p. 50, n. 2.

30 op. cit., p. 51.

31 For an analysis of the metres in the सु० रा० see Dāruva, pp. 117 f.

32 cf. तत् किं कुकविकृतनाटकस्यैवान्यन्मुखेऽन्यन्निर्वहणे । p. 156.

33 cf. कार्योपक्षेपमादौ तनुमपि रचयंस्तस्य विस्तारमिच्छन्
वीजानां गर्भितानां फलमतिगहनं गूढमुद्धेदयंश्च ।
कुर्वन् बुद्ध्या विमर्शं प्रसृतमपि पुनः संहरन् कार्यजातं
कर्ता वा नाटकानामिममनुभवति क्लेशमस्मद्विधो वा ॥

34 cf. न केवलमहं सर्पजीवी प्राकृतकविः खल्वहम् । p. 46.

35 cf. अन्तःकोप (p. 10), सहोत्थायिनः प्रधानपुरुषाः (p. 10), सचिवाय-
त्तसिद्धि (p. 80), लेख्यपत्र (p. 84), अपराग (p. 86), प्रतिविधान, निग्रह,
अनुग्रह (p. 88), अरिमित्रोदासीनव्यवस्था (p. 132), गुल्मस्थान (p. 132),

36 p. 12.

37 cf. आर्ये, कृतश्रमोऽस्मि चतुःषष्ट्यङ्गे ज्योतिःशास्त्रे । तत् प्रवर्त्यतां भगवतो
ब्राह्मणानुद्दिश्य पाकः । चन्द्रोपरागं प्रति तु केनापि विप्रलब्धासि । पश्य—

कूरग्रहः सकेतुश्चन्द्रं सम्पूर्णमण्डलमिदानीम् ।

अभिभवितुमिच्छति वलात्

रक्षत्येनं तु बुधयोगः ॥ p. 4.

38 cf. चतुःषष्ट्यङ्गे ज्योतिःशास्त्रे परं प्रावीण्यमुपगतः । p. 12.

39 cf. राक्षसः—भदन्त निरुप्यतामस्मत्प्रस्थानदिवसः ।

क्षपणकः—श्रावक, निरूपितः । आ मध्याह्नाभिर्धृतसमस्तकल्याणा पौर्ण-
मासी । युष्माकमुत्तरस्या दिशो दक्षिणां दिशं प्रस्थितानां च दक्षिणं नक्षत्रम् । अपि च

अस्ताभिमुखे सूर्ये उदिते सम्पूर्णमण्डले चन्द्रे ।

गमनं बुधस्य लग्ने उदितास्तमिते च केतौ ॥

राक्षसः—भदन्त, तिथिरेव न शुध्यति ।

क्षपणकः—श्रावक, एकगुणा तिथिश्चतुर्गुणं नक्षत्रम् ।

चतुःषष्टिगुणं लग्नमेष ज्योतिषतन्त्रसिद्धान्तः ॥

तत् । लग्नं भवति सुलग्नं सौम्ये ग्रहे यद्यपि दुर्लग्नम् ।

बह्वसि दीर्घां सिद्धिं चन्द्रस्य बलेन गच्छन् ॥

p. 118.

M.I.—10

- 40 cf. साध्ये निश्चितमन्त्रयेन घटितं बिभ्रत्सपक्षे स्थितिं
व्यावृत्तं च विपक्षतो भवति यत्तत्साधनं सिद्धये ।
यत्साध्यं स्वयमेव तुल्यमुभयोः पक्षे विरुद्धं च यत्
तस्याङ्गीकरणेन वादिन इव स्यात् स्वामिनो निग्रहः ॥ p. 138.
- 41 cf. त्रिपुरविजयिनः पातु वो दुःखवृत्तम् । I. 2.
- 42 cf. III 21.
- 43 cf. II. 15.
- 44 cf. II. 4.
- 45 cf. दुष्कालेऽपि कलावसज्जनरुचौ प्राणैः परं रक्षता
नीतं येन यज्ञस्विनातिलघुतामौशीनरीयं यज्ञः ॥ VII. 5.
- 46 cf. नटीः—आर्य, आमन्त्रिता मया भगवन्तो ब्राह्मणाः ।
सूत्रधारः—कथय कस्मिन्निमित्ते ।
नटीः—उपरज्यते किल भगवांश्चन्द्र इति । p. 4.
47. cf. इच्छाम्यार्येणाभ्यनुज्ञातो देवस्य पर्वतेश्वरस्य पारलौकिकं कर्तुं तेन च
धारितपूर्वाणि आभरणानि ब्राह्मणानां प्रतिपादयामीति । p. 20.
- 48 विशाखदत्त seems to have good regard for the former
(cf. VII. 6c) ; but the latter appears to have been low in general
esteem as can be very well inferred from the general belief of
the sight of a क्षपणक being inauspicious. (cf. राक्षसः—कथं प्रथममेव
क्षपणकः । ... अर्वाभत्सदर्शनं कारयित्वा प्रवेशयैनम् । p. 116).
- 49 cf. सैवेयं मम चित्रकर्मरचना भित्तिं विना वर्तते ।
50. see B. C. Law Volume, part I, p. 56, n. 2.
- 51 राजशेखर in his काव्यमीमांसा quotes a stanza which appears
to refer to this incident. cf.
दत्त्वा रुद्धगतिः खसाधिपतये देवां ध्रुवस्वामिनां
यस्मात् खण्डितसाहसो निवृत्ते श्रीशर्मगुप्तो नृपः ।
तस्मिन्नेव हिमालये गुरुगुहाकोणक्वणत्किन्नरे
गीयन्ते तव कार्तिकेयनगरस्त्रीणां गणैः कीर्तयः ॥ p. 47
- For details read Mujumdar and Altekar, A new History
of the Indian people, Vol VI, pp. 161-165
- 52 see B. C. Law volume, part I, p. 57
- 53 cf. Dhruva, Intro. p. xii
- 54 Nos. 1548 ann 1728

CHAPTER III

- 1 cf. आशीर्वचनसंयुक्ता स्तुतिर्यस्मात् प्रयुज्यते ।
 देवद्विजनृपादीनां तस्मान्नान्दीति संज्ञिता ॥
 मङ्गल्यशङ्खचन्द्राञ्जक्रोककैरवशांसिनी ।
 पदैर्युक्ता द्वादशभिरष्टाभिर्वा पदैस्त ॥ सा० द० VI. 24 f.
- 2 cf. नटी विदूषको वापि पारिपार्श्वक एव वा ॥
 सूत्रधारोऽसहिताः संलापं यत्र कुर्वते ।
 चित्रैर्वाक्यैः स्वकार्योत्थैः प्रस्तुताक्षेपिर्भिर्मिथः ।
 आमुखं तत्तु विज्ञेयं नाम्ना प्रस्तावनापि सा ॥ सा० द० VI. 31 f.
- 3 cf. क्रूरग्रहः सकेतुश्चन्द्रं सम्पूर्णमण्डलमिदानीम् ।
 अभिभवितुमिच्छति बलात् रक्षत्येनं तु बुधयोगः ॥ I. 6.
- 4 cf. उद्धात्यकः कथोद्धातः प्रयोगातिशयस्तथा ।
 प्रवर्तकावलगिते पञ्च प्रस्तावनाभिदः ॥ सा० द० VI. 33.
- 5 cf. यदि प्रयोग एकस्मिन् प्रयोगोऽन्यः प्रयुज्यते ।
 तेन पात्रप्रवेशश्चेत् प्रयोगातिशयस्तदा ॥ सा० द० VI. 36
- 6 cf. धनञ्जय defines कथोद्धात as follows:—
 स्वेतिवृत्तसमं वाक्यमर्थं वा यत्र सूत्रिणः ।
 गृहीत्वा प्रविशेत् पात्रं कथोद्धातो द्विधैव सः ॥ द० रू० III 9

According to this view the प्रस्तावना of our play would be कथोद्धात based on वाक्य.

- 7 These are defined as follows:—

कालं प्रवृत्तमाश्रित्य सूत्रधृग्यत्र वर्णयेत् ।
 तदाश्रयश्च पात्रस्य प्रवेशस्तत्प्रवर्तकम् ॥
 यत्रैकत्र समावेशात् कार्यमन्यत् प्रसाध्यते ।
 प्रयोगे खलु तज्ज्ञेयं नाम्नावलगितं बुधैः ॥ सा० द० VI. 37 f.

- 8 Read : पदानि त्वगतार्थानि तदर्थगतये नराः ।
 योजयन्ति पदैरन्यैः स उद्धात्यक उच्यते ॥
 यथा मुद्राराक्षसे सूत्रधारः—
 क्रूरग्रहः सकेतुश्चन्द्रं सम्पूर्णमण्डलमिदानीम् ।
 अभिभवितुमिच्छति बलात्

इत्यनन्तरम् — (नेपथ्ये) आः क एष मयि जीवति चन्द्रगुप्तमभिभवितु-
मिच्छति इति अत्र अन्यार्थवन्त्यपि पदानि हृदिस्थार्थमत्या अर्थान्तरे
संक्रम्य पात्रप्रवेशः । सा० द० VI. 34 and श्रुति Thereon.

9 गुणवत्युपायनिलये स्थितिहेतोः साधिके त्रिवर्गस्य ।

मद्भवनीतिविषये कार्यादार्ये द्रुतमुपेहि ॥

10 क्रूरग्रहः सकेतुश्चन्द्रं सम्पूर्णमण्डलमिदानीम् ।

अभिभवितुमिच्छति बलाद् रक्षत्येनं तु युधयोगः ॥

11 This is shown by the fact That निपुणक in Act I describes जीवसिद्धि as one of the three persons in the capital, who were चन्द्रगुप्तादपरक्त, in the words प्रथमं तावदार्यस्य रिपुपक्षे बद्धपक्षपातः क्षपणकः । P. 16.

12 कायस्थ इति लघ्वी मात्रा । तथापि न युक्त प्राकृतमपि रिपुमवज्ञातुम् । तस्मिन्मया सुहृच्छत्रना सिद्धार्थको विनिक्षिप्तः । P. 18

13 ननु वक्तव्यं राक्षस एवास्मदङ्गुलिप्रणया संवृत्त इति । P. 18.

14 भद्र श्रुतम् । अपसर । नाचिरादस्य परिश्रमस्यानुरूपं फलमधिगमिष्यसि । (P. 20) Also read the remark reported to have been passed by चाणक्य regarding the undue diligence or haste shown by दाक्षवर्मन् in Act II ' अचिरादस्य दाक्षस्यानुरूपं फलमधिगमिष्यसि दाक्षवर्मन् । ' P. 50

15 अथवा न लिखामि । पूर्वमनाभिव्यक्तमेवास्ताम् । P. 22

16 cf. वत्स, श्रोत्रिशाक्षराणि प्रयत्नलिखितान्यपि नियतमस्फुटानि भवन्ति । तदुच्यतामस्मद्भचनात् सिद्धार्थकः etc. P. 22

17 cf. चाणक्यः—(चिन्तां नाटयति । आत्मगतम्) अपि नाम दुरात्मा राक्षसो गृह्येत ।

सिद्धार्थकः—आर्यं गृहीतः

चाणक्यः—(सहर्षमात्मगतम्) हन्त, गृहीतो राक्षसः । (प्रकाशम्) भद्र कोऽयं गृहीतः ।

सिद्धार्थकः—गृहीत आर्यसन्देशः । तद् गमिष्यामि कार्यसिद्ध्यै ।

चाणक्यः—(साङ्गुलिमुद्रं लेखमर्पयित्वा) गम्यताम् । अस्तु ते कार्यसिद्धिः । p. 24.

18 भो श्रेष्ठिन्, एवमयं राजापथ्यकारिषु तीक्ष्णदण्डो न मर्षयिष्यति राक्षसकलत्र-
प्रच्छादनं भवतः । तद्रक्ष परकलत्रेणात्मनः कलत्रं जीवितं च । p. 32

19 आर्यं किं ये भयं दर्शयसि । सन्तमपि गेहे अमात्यराक्षसस्य गृहजनं न समर्पयामि किं पुनरसन्तम् । p. 32.

20 चाणक्यः—(सहर्षम्) हन्त, लब्ध इदानीं राक्षसः । कुतः
त्यजत्यप्रियवत् प्राणान् यथा तस्यायमापदि ।
तथैवास्यापदि प्राणा नूनं तस्यापि न प्रियाः ॥ p. 34.

21 cf. (आत्मगतम्) दुरात्मन् राक्षस, क्रेदानीं गमिष्यसि । एषोऽहमचिरा-
द्भवन्तम्—

स्वच्छन्दमेकचरमुज्ज्वलदानशक्ति-
मुत्सेकिना मदवलेन विगाहमानम् ।
बुध्या निगृह्य वृषलस्य कृते क्रियाया-
मारण्यकं गजमिव प्रगुणीकरोमि ॥ p.36.

22 cf. II. 6 and 7.

23 cf. तदहमाश्रयोन्मूलनेनैव त्वामकामां करोमि । p. 42

24 cf. प्रतिक्षणमरातिवृत्तान्तोपलब्धये तत्संहतिभेदनाय च व्यापारिताः सुहृदा
जीवसिद्धिप्रभृतयः । p. 42.

25 cf. तस्यैव बुद्धिविशिखेन भिनद्धि मम
वर्माभवेद्यदि न दैवमदृश्यमानम् ॥ II. 8 cd.

26 cf. साधु अमात्यराक्षस, साधु । साधु श्रेत्रिय, साधु । साधु मन्त्रिवृहस्पते
साधु । कुतः—

ऐश्वर्यादनपेतमीश्वरमयं लोकोऽर्थतः सेवते
तं गच्छन्त्यनु ये विपत्तिषु पुनस्ते तत्प्रतिष्ठाशया ।
भर्तुयै प्रलयेऽपि पूर्वसुकृतासङ्गेन निःसङ्गया
भक्त्या कार्यधुरं वहन्ति बहवस्ते दुर्लभास्त्वादृशाः ॥ et seq. p. 10.

27 cf. न नः कौतूहलं सर्पेषु । p. 44.

28 प्रियंवदक, प्रवेशयैनं सुकविरेषः । श्रोतव्यमस्मात्सुभाषितम् । p. 46

29 प्रियंवदक मुजङ्गैरिदानीं विनोदयितव्यम् । तद्विश्रम्यतामितः परिजनेन ।
त्वमपि स्वाधिकारमशून्यं कुरु । p. 46.

30 cf. कार्यव्यप्रत्वान्मनसः प्रभूतत्वाच्च प्रणिधीनां विस्मृतम् । इदानीं स्मृतिरुप-
लब्धा । (p. 46.) Also cf. कस्मिन्प्रयोजने मयायं प्रहित इति प्रयोजानां बाहुल्यान्न
स्वत्ववधारयामि । p. 100.

31 cf. अये विराध—(इत्यर्थोक्ते) ननु विरुद्धमशुः p. 46.

32 cf. (शस्त्रमाकृष्य ससम्भ्रमम्) आः मयि स्थिते कः कुसुमपुरमुपरोत्स्यति ।
प्रवीरक प्रवीरक क्षिप्रमिदानीम् —et seq. p. 48.

33 cf. (निःश्वस्य) कष्टं वृत्तमिदम् । मया पुनर्ज्ञातं स एवायं काल इति । (शस्त्रमुत्सृज्य) हा देव नन्द स्मरामि ते राक्षसं प्रति प्रसादातिशयम् । et seq. p. 48.

34 cf. II. 15

35 cf. (सोद्वेगम्) सखे, कुतश्चाणक्यवटोः परितोषः । अफलमनिष्टफलं वा दारुवर्मणः प्रयत्नमवगच्छामि । p. 52.

36 cf. नियतमतिधूर्तेन चाणक्यवटुना तस्यापि तपस्विनः कमप्युपांशुवधमाकलय्य पर्वतेश्वरविनाशेन जनितमयशः प्रमार्ष्टुमेषा लोकप्रसिद्धिरुपचिता । p. 52

37 cf. कथमत्रापि दैवेनोपहृता वयम् । p. 56. Also read :—
(साक्षम्) कष्टं भोः कष्टम् । सखे पश्य दैवसम्पदं दुरात्मनश्चन्द्रगुप्तहृत्कस्य । कुतः et seq. p. 56.

38 cf. (स्वगतम्) साधु कौटिल्य साधु ।

परिहृतमयशः पातितमस्माद्यु च घातितोऽर्धराज्यहरः ।

एकमपि नीतिबीजं बहुफलतामेति यस्य तव ॥ p. 58.

39 cf. अथवा स्वाम्यर्थमुपरतो न शोच्यस्त्वम् । वयमेवात्र शोच्या ये नन्दकुलविनाशेऽपि जीवितुमिच्छामः । P. 58.

40 cf. तत् किं परितुष्टः कथयसि अपवाहितं राक्षसकलत्रमिति । ननु वक्तव्यं संयमितं सपुत्रकलत्रो राक्षस इति । P. 60.

41 cf. तस्माच्च सुहृत्प्राणपरिरक्षणपरितुष्टात् पारितोषिकं ग्राह्यम् । राक्षस एव कंचित्कालं सेवितव्यः । (p. 24;) also read: (स्वगतम्) अयं स्वत्वार्थोपदेशः । भवतु । तथा करिष्यामि । (p. 62;) and जानात्येवामात्यो यथा चाणक्यवटुकस्य विप्रियं कृत्वा नास्ति पुनः पाटलिपुत्रे प्रवेश इति इच्छाम्यहममात्यचरणावेव शुश्रूषितुम् । P. 64.

42 cf. आर्यं तातेन श्रुतपूर्वाणां विशेषतश्चन्द्रगुप्तहस्तगतानां वणिग्विक्रय इति न युज्यते । अथवा युज्यत एवैतत् । कुतः—

चन्द्रगुप्तस्य विक्रेतुरधिकं लाभमिच्छतः ।

कल्पिता मूल्यमेतेषां क्रूरेण भवता वयम् ॥ P. 148.

43 cf. राज्यप्राप्तिकृतार्थमेकमपरं तीर्णप्रतिज्ञार्णवं सौहार्दात् कृतकृत्यतैव नियतं लब्धान्तरा भेत्यति ॥ II. 23 cd.

44 विश्वनाथ defines गर्भाङ्क as follows:—

अङ्गोदरप्रविधे यो रज्जुद्वारामुखादिमान् ।

अङ्गोऽपरः स गर्भाङ्कः सबीजः फलवानपि ॥ सा. द. V1. 20.

In his प्रियदर्शिका Act III श्रीहर्ष has made the maids of वासवदत्ता enact before her a play representing her early adventures with वत्स. We have two more instances of गर्भाङ्क, one in भवभूति's उत्तर-रामचरित act VII and the other in राजशेखर's बालरामायण Act III.

45 This is defined as—

किं ब्रवीष्येवमित्यादि विना पात्रं ब्रवीति यत् ।

श्रुत्वेवानुक्तमप्येकस्तत् स्यादाकाशमाषितम् ॥ द. रू. I. 67.

46 cf. (स्वगतम्) राज्यं हि नाम राजधर्मानुवृत्तिपरस्य नृपतेर्महदप्रीति-स्थानम् । et seq. P. 70

47 cf. दुराराध्या हि राजलक्ष्मीरात्मवाङ्मिरपि राजामिः । कुतः । et seq. P. 70.

48 cf. अन्यच्च । कृतककलहं कृत्वा स्वतन्त्रेण त्वया किञ्चित्कालान्तरं व्यवहर्तव्यमित्यार्यादेशः । स च मया कथमपि पातकमिवाभ्युपगतः । P. 70.

49 cf. III. 6

50 cf. III. 7-9

51 cf. III. 15

52 cf. न शक्नुमो वयमार्यस्य वाचा वाचमतिशयितुम् । P. 90.

53 cf. सर्वथा अमात्यराक्षस एवात्र प्रशस्यतरः । and also III. 26.

54 cf. (विहस्य) एतत् कृतं राक्षसेन । मया पुनर्ज्ञातं नन्दमिव भवन्तमुद्धृत्य भवानिव भूतले मलयकेतू राजाधिराजपदे नियोजित इति । P. 92.

55 cf. अन्येनैवेदमनुष्ठितम् । किमत्रार्यस्य । and नन्दकुलविद्वेषिणा दैवेन । P. 92.

56 cf. विद्वांसोऽप्यविकथना भवन्ति ।

57 cf. अनेन शुष्ककलहेन शिरोवेदना मां वाधते । P. 96.

58 cf. राक्षस राक्षस एष भवतः कौटिल्यबुद्धिविजिगीषोर्बुद्धेः प्रकर्षः ।

चाणक्यतश्चलितभक्तिमहं सुखेन

जेष्मामि मौर्यमिति सम्प्रति यः प्रयुक्तः ।

मेदः किलैष भवता सकलः स एव

सम्पत्स्यते शठ तवैव हि दूषणाय ॥ P. 94.

59 आर्याज्ञैव मम लङ्घितगौरवस्य

बुद्धिः प्रवेष्टुमिव भूविवरं प्रवृत्ता ।

ये सत्यमेव हि गुरुनतिपातयन्ति

तेषां कथं नु हृदयं न भिनत्ति लज्जा ॥ III. 33.

60 cf. भद्र शनैर्मन्त्रय । एषोऽमात्यः कार्यचिन्ताजनितेन जागरेण समुत्पन्नशीर्षवेदनोऽद्यापि शयनं न मुञ्चति । P. 98

61. cf. आर्याः एष खलु कुमारो मलयकेतुः समुत्पन्नशीर्षवेदनममात्यराक्षसं प्रोक्षितुमिह एवागच्छति । P. 120.

62 cf. (आकर्ष्य) सखे भागुरायण, कुमुपुरवृत्तान्तः प्रस्तूयते । न तत्र तावदुपसर्पामः । शृणुमस्तावत् । p. 106. It must, however, be noted that मलयकेतु has offered a plausible ground for what he has proposed to do. cf. कुतः । सत्त्वभङ्गभयाद्वाङ्मः कथयन्त्यन्यथा पुरः ।
अन्यथा विवृतार्थेषु स्वैरालापेषु मन्त्रिणः ॥ IV. 8.

63 cf. मलयकेतुः—सखे भागुरायण, विज्ञप्तोऽहमिहागच्छद्भिर्भद्रभटप्रभृतिभिः यथा न वयममात्यराक्षसद्वारेण कुमारमाश्रयणीयमाश्रयामहे । किन्तु कुमारस्य सेनापतिं शिखरकसुरीकृत्य दुष्टमात्यपरिगृहीताच्चन्द्रगुप्तादपरक्षाः कुमारमाभिरामिकगुणयोगादाश्रयणीयमाश्रयामहे इति । तत्र मया सुचिरमपि विचारयता तेषामर्थं वाक्यार्थोऽवधारितः ।

भागुरायणः—कुमार न दुर्बोधोऽयमर्थः । विजिगीषुमात्मगुणसम्पन्नं प्रियहितद्वारेणाश्रयणीयमाश्रयेदिति तु न्याय्य एवायमर्थः ।

मलयकेतुः—सखे भागुरायण, नन्वमात्यराक्षसोऽस्माकं प्रियतमो हिततमश्च ।

भागुरायणः—एवमेतत् । किन्त्वमात्यराक्षसश्चाणक्ये बद्धवैरो न चन्द्रगुप्ते । तद्यदि कदाचिच्चाणक्यमतिजितकाशिनमसहमानः स साचिव्यादपरोपयेत्ततो नन्दकुलभक्त्या नन्दान्वय एवायमिति सुहृज्जनापेक्षया चामात्यराक्षसश्चन्द्रगुप्तेन सह संदर्धीत । चन्द्रगुप्तोऽपि पितृपर्यायागत एवायमिति सन्धिमनुमन्येत । एवं सत्यस्मात् कुसारो न विश्वसेदित्ययमेषां वाक्यार्थः ।

मलयकेतुः—युज्यते । अमात्यस्य गृहमादेशय । p. 104.

64 (आत्मगतम्) कस्मिन् प्रयोजने मयायं प्रहित इति प्रयोजनानां बाहुल्यात् खल्ववधारयामि । (इति चिन्तां नाटयति) p. 100.

65 cf. शकटदास, एवमेतत् । गच्छ विश्रामय करभक्तम् ।

शकटदासः—तथा । (इति पुरुषेण सह निष्क्रान्तः) p. 110.

66 cf. शकटदास नेदमुपपद्यते । पश्य । et seq. p. 110.

67 cf. अलमन्यथा विकल्प्य । उपपद्यत एवैतत् । पश्यत्वमात्यः । et seq. p. 110.

68. cf. It may perhaps be argued that the presence of a dear friend like शकटदास is not unnatural in view of the fact that राक्षस is suffering from headache.

69 cf. दिष्ट्या न सचिवायत्ततन्त्रोऽस्मि । p. 114.

70 cf. ऐकान्तिकीमेव कार्यसिद्धिमवगन्तुमर्हति कुमारः । कुतः । et seq. p. 114.

71 cf. IV. 16-17.

72 In fact it is मलयकेतु alone who is shown to enter into the presence of राक्षस, with the remark 'अहमेवार्थं द्रष्टुमागतः ।' (p. 110). Nothing is here said about भागुरायण. This may be interpreted to mean that भागुरायण did not accompany मलयकेतु into राक्षस's presence. The same is shown again by the stage direction 'यथार्हमुपविष्टौ' the dual wherein shows that besides राक्षस and मलयकेतु there was none else there. After IV. 17, however, we get the stage-direction 'इति भागुरायणेन सह निष्क्रान्तो मलयकेतुः' (p. 116) which would mean that भागुरायण was present on the stage while मलयकेतु was engaged in conversation with राक्षस.

73. cf. प्रायो मृत्यास्त्यजन्ति प्रचलितविभवं स्वामिनं सेवमानाः । IV. 21 d.

74. cf. सर्वथा शिवाः पन्थानः सन्तु । (p. 34); Also read तत्तत्कारणमुत्पाद्य कृतकृत्यतामापादिताश्चन्द्रगुप्तसहोत्थायिनो भद्रभटप्रभृतयः प्रधानपुरुषाः । p. 10 f.

75. e. g. The letter which चाणक्य got written by शकटदास, the अलङ्कार which चाणक्य secured through विश्वावसु and his brothers from चन्द्रगुप्त, the ornaments sent to राक्षस by मलयकेतु etc. etc.

76. Ultimately perhaps the root of राक्षस's defeat may be said to lie in a trait in his own character viz full faith or absence of suspicion or cautiousness as it may be described negatively. It is obvious that this trait in his character is responsible for several blunders committed by him.

77 For definitions of प्रवेशक and विष्कम्भक read :—

वृत्तवर्तिष्यमाणानां कथांशानां निदर्शकः ।

संक्षेपार्थस्तु विष्कम्भो मध्यपात्रप्रयोजितः ॥

एकानेककृतः शुद्धः संकीर्णो नीचमध्यमैः ।

तद्वदेवानुदात्तोक्त्या नीचपात्रप्रयोजितः ।

प्रवेशोऽद्भ्यस्यान्तः शेषार्थस्योपसूचकः ॥ द० रू० I. 59 ff.

78 This मुद्रा of भागुरायण is no less important from the dramatic point of view. It is owing to its absence that सिद्धार्थक is captivated and brought before भागुरायण who questions him in the presence of मलयकेतु. It is here in fact that we evince a beginning of the fall of राक्षस.

79 This situation, so far as stage arrangement is concerned, is similar to the one in the bifocal scene in Act IV. Even here मलयकेतु's mind is adversely affected by the information that he gathers by overhearing the conversation between भागुरायण and क्षपणक.

80 cf. कष्टमेवमस्मासु स्नेहवान् कुमारो मलयकेतुरतिसन्धातव्य इत्यहो दुष्करम् । अथवा et seq. P. 126.

81 cf. (स्वगतम्) अहो राक्षसं प्रति विकल्पबाहुल्यादाकुला मे बुद्धिर्न निश्चय-मधिगच्छति कुतः et seq. P. 126 f.

It may be observed here that मलयकेतु's mind has been very well prejudiced against राक्षस in Act IV ; but yet (this remark of मलयकेतु shows) the poisoning is not complete. This is what is accomplished by the bifocal scene here.

82 cf. क्षपणकः—का गतिः । शृणोतु श्रावकः । अस्ति तावदहं मन्दभाग्यः प्रथमं पाटलिपुत्रे निवसन् राक्षसेन मित्रत्वमुपगतः । तस्मिन्नवसरे राक्षसेन गूढविषकन्या-प्रयोगमुत्पाद्य घातितो देवः पर्वतेश्वरः ।

मलयकेतुः—(सबाष्पमात्मगतम्) कथं राक्षसेन घातितो न चाणक्येन ।

भागुरायणः—भदन्त ततस्ततः ।

क्षपणकः—ततोऽहं राक्षसमित्रमिति कृत्वा चाणक्यहतकेन सनिकारं नगरा-न्निर्वासितः । इदानीमपि राक्षसेनानेकाकार्यकुशलेन किमपि तादृशमारभ्यते येनाहं जीवलोकान्निष्कासिष्ये ।

भागुरायणः—भदन्त, प्रतिश्रुतार्थमनिच्छता चाणक्यहतकेनेदमकार्यमनुष्ठितं न राक्षसेनेति श्रुतमस्माभिः ।

क्षपणकः—शान्तं पापम् । चाणक्येन विषकन्याया नामापि न श्रुतम् । P. 130

83 cf. भदन्त, इयं मुद्रा दीयते । एहि कुमारं श्रावय । P. 130

84 cf. अये, श्रुतं मलयकेतुहृत्केन । हन्त कृतार्थोऽस्मि । P. 130

85 cf. सखे भागुरायण, लेखमपनय । and मुद्रां परिपालयन्नुद्वाच्य दर्शय । P. 134

86 cf. सखे अयं लेखस्याशून्यार्थो भविष्यति । इमामपि मुद्रां परिपालयन्नुद्वाच्य दर्शय । P. 136

87 cf. (विलोक्य) अये तदिदमाभरणं मया स्वशरीरादवतार्य राक्षसाय प्रेषितम् । व्यक्तं चन्द्रगुप्तस्य लेखः । P. 136

88 cf. (स्वगतम्) कथं चित्रवर्मादयोऽपि मामभिबुध्यन्ति । अथवा अत एव तेषां राक्षसे निरतिशया प्रीतिः । P. 138

89 cf. (आत्मगतम्) आपूर्णमस्मद्वलं चन्द्रगुप्तबलैरिति यत्सत्यं न मे मनसः परिशुद्धिरस्ति । कुतः—

साध्ये निश्चितमन्वयेन घटितं विभ्रत् सपक्षे स्थितिं
व्यावृत्तं च सपक्षतो भवति यत् तत् साधनं सिद्धये ।
यत् साध्यं स्वयमेव तुल्यमुभयोः पक्षे विरुद्धं च यत्
तस्याङ्गीकरणेन वादिन इव स्यात् स्वामिनो निग्रहः ॥

अथवा विज्ञातापरागहेतुभिः प्राक्परिगृहीतोपजापैरापूर्णमिति न विकल्पयितुमर्हामि । P. 138

90 cf. परिधापिताः कुमारैराभरणानि वयम् । तत्र युक्तमनलङ्घनैः कुमारदर्शनमनुभवितुम् । अतो यत्तदलङ्करणत्रयं कृतं तन्मध्यादेकं दीयतामिति । P. 140

91 cf. (आत्मगतम्) अधिकारपदं नाम निर्दोषस्यापि पुरुषस्य महाशङ्का-स्थानम् । कुतः et seq. P. 140

92 cf. V. 13

93 cf. (स्वगतम्) कथं य एव मद्विनाशेन चन्द्रगुप्तमाराधयितुमुद्यतास्त एव मां परिवृण्वन्ति । P. 142

94 cf. राक्षसः—अवसितमिदानीं गतागतप्रयोजनम् । अल्पैरेवाहोभिर्वयमेव तत्र गन्तारः ।

मलयकेतुः—(स्वगतम्) विज्ञायते । p. 142

95 cf. (स्वगतम्) अहो सुखिष्ठोऽभूच्छत्रुप्रयोगः । कुतः ।

लेखोऽयं न ममेति नोत्तरमिदं मुद्रा मदीया यतः
सौहार्दं शकटेन खण्डितमिति श्रद्धेयमेतत् कथम् ।

मौर्ये भूषणविक्रयं नरपतौ को नाम सम्भावयेत्
तस्मात् सम्प्रतिपत्तिरेव हि वरं न ग्राम्यमत्रोत्तरम् ॥ p. 148.

96 cf. कुमार य आर्यस्तं पृच्छ । वयमिदानीमनार्याः संश्रुताः । p. 148

97 cf. राक्षसः—कुमार, एवमयुक्तव्याहारिणा निर्णयो दत्तः । भवतु तव को दोषः । p. 148

98 cf. मलयकेतुः—(लेखमलङ्करणस्थगिकां च निर्दिश्य) इदमिदानीं किम् ।

राक्षसः—(सवाष्पम्) विधिविलसितम् । et seq. p. 150

99 cf. (सरोषम्) किमद्यापि निहूयत एव । विधेः किलैतव्यवसितं न लोभस्य । अनार्य et seq. p. 150.

100 cf. राक्षसः—नाहं पर्वतेश्वरे विषकन्यां प्रयुक्तवान् ।

मलयकेतुः—केन तर्हि व्यापादितस्तातः ।

राक्षसः—दैवमत्र प्रष्टव्यम् ।

मलयकेतुः—(सरोषम्) दैवमत्र प्रष्टव्यम् । न क्षपणको जीवसिद्धिः ।

राक्षसः—(स्वगतम्) कथं जीवसिद्धिरपि चाणक्यप्रणिधिः । हन्त रिपुभिर्महदयमपि स्वीकृतम् । p. 150.

101 cf. राक्षस राक्षस नाहं विश्रम्भघाती राक्षसः । मलयकेतुः खल्वहम् । तद् गच्छ समाश्रीयतां सर्वात्मना चन्द्रगुप्तः । p. 152

102 cf. (सावेगम्) हा विक् कष्टम् । तेऽपि घातिताश्चित्रवर्मादयस्तपस्विनः तत्कथं सुहृद्विनाशाय राक्षसश्चेष्टते न रिपुविनाशाय । तत् किमिदानीं मन्दभाग्यः करवाणि ।

किं गच्छामि तपोवनं न तपसा शाम्येत् सवैरं मनः

किं भर्तृननुयामि जीवति रिपौ स्त्रीणामियं योग्यता ।

किंवा खङ्गसखः पताम्यरिवले नैतच्च युक्तं भवे—

चेतश्चन्दनदासमोक्षरभसं रुन्ध्यात्कृतघ्नं न चेत् ॥ v. 25

103 वयस्य भद्रभटप्रमुखाः किल देवाच्चन्द्रगुप्तादपरक्ता मलयकेतुं समाश्रिता इति लोके मन्यते । तत् किं कुक्कविकृतनाटकस्यैवान्यन्मुखेऽन्यन्निर्वहणे ।

सिद्धार्थकः—वयस्य दैवगत्या इवाश्रुतगत्यै नाम आर्यचाणक्यनीत्यै । p. 156

Also read :—अतिमुग्धोऽसीदानीं त्वं यतोऽमात्यराक्षसेनाप्यनवगाहितपूर्वमार्य-चाणक्यस्य चरितमवगाहितुमिच्छसि । p. 158

104 cf. तदिदानीमपि तावदरातिहस्तगतो विनश्येन्न तु राक्षसश्चन्द्रगुप्तेन सह संदधीत । p. 164

105 cf. अथवा मम काममसत्यसन्ध इति वरमयशो न तु शत्रुवञ्चनपराभूत इति । p. 164

106 cf. अत्र प्रविश्य कुतश्चिच्चन्दनदासप्रवृत्तिमुपलप्स्ये । p. 164

107 cf. पुरुषः—अथ पुनः केनोपायेन त्वं चन्दनदासं मरणान्मोचयसि ।

राक्षसः—(खड्गमाकृष्य) नन्वनेन व्यवसायसुहृदा निस्त्रिंशेन । p. 172f.

108 cf. आश्चर्यं दिष्ट्या दृष्टोऽसि । प्रसीदन्त्वमात्यपादाः । et seq. p. 174.

109 cf. vi. 21

110 cf. अयं मित्रकार्येण मे विनाशो, न पुरुषदोषेण । (p. 180); जात अवश्य-
म्भवितव्ये विनाशे मित्रकार्यं समुद्रहमानो विनाशमनुभवामि । p. 182.

111 cf. अथवा न नृशंसानामुदासीनेषु इतरेषु वा विशेषोऽस्ति । तथा हि et seq. p. 180.

112 cf. अथवा दुर्लभास्ते मानुषा य एतस्मिन्काले दृष्टिपथेऽपि तिष्ठन्ति । p. 180

113 cf. स्वर्गं गतानां तावद्देवा दुःखितं परिजनमनुकम्पन्ते । p. 182.

114 cf. भद्रं मुहूर्तं तिष्ठ यावत्पुत्रकं सान्त्वयामि । p. 182.

115 cf. तात किमिदमपि भणितव्यम् । कुलधर्मः खल्वेषोऽस्माकम् । p. 182.

116 cf. IV. 4.

117 cf. चन्दनदासः—(सवाष्पं विलोक्य) अमात्य किमिदम् ।

राक्षसः—त्वदीयसुचरितैकदेशस्यानुकरणं किलैतत् ।

चन्दनदासः—अमात्य, सर्वमपीमं प्रयासं निष्फलं कुर्वता त्वया किमनुष्ठितम् ।

राक्षसः—सखे, स्वार्थं एवानुष्ठितः । कृतमुपालम्भेन । P. 184

118 cf. VI. 5.

119 cf. चाणक्यः—भद्रं कथय कथय ।

केनोत्तुङ्गशिखाकलापकपिलो वद्धः पटान्ते शिखी

पाशैः केन सदागतेरगतिता सद्यः समासादिता ।

केनानेकपदानवासितसटः सिंहोऽर्पितः पञ्जरे

भीमः केन च नैकनक्रमकरो दोभ्यां प्रतीणोऽर्णवः ।

चाण्डालः—नीतिनिपुणबुद्धिनार्येण ।

चाणक्यः—मा मैवम् । नन्दकुलविद्वेषिणा दैवेनेति ब्रूहि । P. 186.

120 cf शकटदासोऽपि तपस्वी तादृशं लेखमजानन्नेव कपटलेखं मया लेखित इति । P. 188.

121 cf. दिष्ट्या शकटदासं प्रत्यपनीतो विकल्पः ।

122 cf. VII. 9

123 cf. VII. 10-11

124 cf. किं बहुना । न खलु भवतः शस्त्रग्रहणमन्तरेण चन्दनदासस्य जीवितमस्ति ।

राक्षसः—(प्रकाशम्) विष्णुगुप्त, नमः सर्वकार्यप्रतिपत्तिहेतवे मुहूर्त्तस्नेहाय । का गतिः एष प्रहोऽस्मि ।

IV

1 cf. I. 11-13; III. 27-28; etc.

2 cf. I. 21 also read: वयस्य, को जीवलोके जीवितुकामः आर्यचाणक्य-स्याज्ञप्तिं प्रतिकूलयति । (P. 160).

3 e. g. The ornaments of पर्वतेश्वर and the मुद्रा of राक्षस.

4 This is clear from his argumentation in Act III.

5 PP. 28 f.

6 cf. I. 15-16.

7 cf. VII. 7; II. 19.

8 चन्दनदास calls him चाणक्यहतक and दुष्ट (cf. P. 26); and also advises his son to stay in a चाणक्यविरहित देशः (cf. P. 182).

9 cf. III. 15.

10 cf. साधु अमात्यराक्षस, साधु । साधु श्रोत्रिय, साधु । साधु मन्त्रिवृहस्पते साधु कुतः et. seq.; also cf. VII. 8 where he appreciates राक्षस. Also read: साधु चन्दनदास, साधु । and the stanza that follows (P. 32).

11 This is shown by the almost identical remark that he passes at what is done by his spy (P. 20), and also by दासवर्मन्. (P. 50).

12 cf. I. 15.

13 cf. I. 14 and the preceding speech of चाणक्य. Also cf. II. 20 and the preceding remark of राक्षस and विराधगुप्त. Also read II. 22.

14 cf. अये देवपादपद्मोपजीविनोऽवस्थेयम् । (इति रोदिति ।) P. 48

15 cf. II. 16; V. 21; VI. 7; 15.

16 cf. P. 42 f.

17 cf. उच्यतां शकटदासः । यथा परिधापिताः कुमारेणाभरणानि वयम् । तत्र युक्तमनलङ्घितैः कुमारदर्शनमनुभवितुम् । अतो यत्तदलङ्करणत्रयं कौतं तन्मध्यादेकं दीयतामिति । (P. 140).

18 cf. संवदन्त्यक्षराणि । शकटदासस्तु मित्रमिति च विसंवदन्त्यक्षराणि । et. seq. P. 146.

19 cf. दिष्ट्या शकटदासं प्रत्यपनीतो विकल्पः । (P. 188).

20 cf. His request that मलयकेतु's life should be saved. (P. 192).

21 cf. III. 21.

22 cf. राज्यं हि नाम राजधर्मानुवृत्तिपरस्य नृपतेर्महदप्रीतिस्थानम् । and the following stanza. (P. 70).

23 cf. दुराराध्या हि राजलक्ष्मीरात्मवद्भिरपि राजभिः । and the following stanza. (III. 5).

24 cf. III. 7-9.

25 cf. भोः श्रेष्ठिन्, चन्द्रगुप्तराज्यमिदं न नन्दराज्यम् । यतो नन्दस्यैवार्थरुचेरर्थ-सम्बन्धः प्रीतिमुत्पादयति । चन्द्रगुप्तस्य तु भवतामपरिक्लेश एव । (P. 28).

26 cf. वृषल एव केवलं प्रधानप्रकृतिरस्मात्वारोपितराज्यतन्त्रभारः सततमुदास्ते । (P. 12); ततः सचिवायत्तसिद्धेस्तव किं प्रयोजनान्वेषणेन । (P. 80)

27 cf. III. 12; 18; cf. VII. 14 where राक्षस also suggestively compares नन्द and चन्द्रगुप्त.

28 cf. अहो विवेकशून्यता म्लेच्छस्य । कुतः । and the following stanza. (VI. 8).

29 cf. His soliloquy in Act IV. (P. 102).

30 cf इमान्याभरणानि कुमारेण स्वशरीरादवतार्यं प्रेषितानि धारयितुमर्हत्यार्यः । (P. 44).

31 cf. VII. 14

32 cf चन्द्रगुप्तशरीरमभिद्रोग्धुमस्मत्प्रयुक्तानां तीक्ष्णरसदायिनामुपसंग्रहार्थं पर-कृत्योपजापार्थं च महता कोशसंचयेन स्थापितः शकटदासः । (P. 42).

33 P. 24

34 P. 146

35 cf. हन्त लब्ध इदानीं राक्षसः । कुतः ।

त्यजत्यप्रियवत् प्राणान् यथा तस्यायमापदि ।

तथैवास्यापदि प्राणा नूनं तस्यापि न प्रियाः ॥ I. 25

36 cf. तर्हि परितुष्टः कथयसि अपवाहितं राक्षसकलत्रमिति । ननु वक्तव्यं संयमितः सपुत्रकलत्रो राक्षस इति । (P. 60)

37 cf. आर्ये, अयं मित्रकार्येण मे विनाशो न पुनः पुरुषदोषेण । तदलं विषादेन । (P. 180); स्वर्गं गतानां तावद्देवा दुःखितं परिजनमनुकम्पन्ते । अन्यच्च मित्रकार्येण मे विनाशो नायुक्तकार्येण । तत् किं हर्षस्थानेऽपि स्यते । (P. 182); जात, अवश्यं भवितव्ये विनाशे मित्रकार्यं समुद्रहमानो विनाशमनुभवामि । P. (182); अमात्य, सर्वमपीमं प्रयासं निष्फलं कुर्वता त्वया किमनुष्ठितम् । (P. 184)

38 cf. P. 10

39 cf. अयं खल्वार्योपदेशः । भवतु । तथा करिष्यामि । (प्रकाशम्) अमात्य प्रथमप्रविष्टस्य नास्ति कोऽपि परिचितो यत्रेममात्यस्य प्रसादं निक्षिप्य निर्धृतो भवामि । तस्मादिच्छाम्यहमेतया मुद्रया मुद्रितममात्यस्यैव भाण्डागारे स्थापयितुम् । यदा मे प्रयोजनं तदा ग्रहीष्यामि । (P. 62); जानात्येवामात्यो यथा चाणक्यवदुक्तस्य विप्रियं कृत्वा नास्ति पुनः पाटलिपुत्रे प्रवेश इतीच्छाम्यहममात्यचरणावेव शुश्रूषितुम् ।
(p. 64)

40 cf. V. 1.

41 cf. वयस्य को जीवलोके जीवितुकाम आर्यचाणक्यस्याज्ञातिं प्रतिकूलयति ।

p. 160

42 cf. पिता ते चाणक्येन घातित इति रहसि त्रासयित्वा भागुरायणेनापवाहितः पर्वतकपुत्रो मलयकेतुः । (P. 10)

43 P. 104

44 P. 128 f

45 p. 134 ff.

46 p. 146

47 p. 132.

48 cf. ईदृशमस्य विशेषतः कुमारेणात्मगान्नादवतार्य प्रसादीकृतस्येयं परित्याग-भूमिः । (p. 144).

49 cf. V. 4 and the preceding remark of भागुरायण (p. 126).

50 p. 12.

51 cf. e. g IV. 19 and 20.

52 p. 118.

53 cf. अये श्रुतं मलयकेतुद्वतकेन । हन्त कृतार्थोऽस्मि । (p. 130).

54 cf. VI. 4; V. 1; and IV. 3.

55 cf. p. 180 f.

56 cf. तात किमिदमपि भणितव्यम् । कुलधर्मः खल्वेषोऽस्माकम् । (p. 182).

57 cf. दशरूपक ३.३०.

58 cf. दशरूपक २.१-२.

59 cf. दशरूपक २.३; न्यायशास्त्र २४.३ ff.

60 This and the next paragraphs are based on Allardyce Nicoll's 'The Theory of Drama' (1931).

61 p. 10.

62 Even चाणक्य, it should be noted here, calls him तपस्वी. cf. p. 8.

63 cf. राजन् चन्द्रगुप्त, विदितमेव ते यथा वयं मलयकेतौ कंचित् कालमुषिताः । तत् परिरक्ष्यन्तामस्य प्राणाः । (p. 192).

64 cf. अये, अयमसावमात्यराक्षसः येन महात्मना—
गुरुभिः कल्पनाङ्गैर्दोषजगरहेतुभिः ।
चिरमायासिता सेना वृषलस्य मतिश्च मे ॥ VII- 8.

CHAPTER V

1 According to घनञ्जय the plot of a drama may be प्रख्यात (or derived from history), उत्पाद्य (imaginary) or मिश्र (i. e. partly historical and partly imaginary). घुण्डिराज says that the plot of the मुद्राराक्षस is of the first variety. cf. प्रख्यातोत्पाद्यमिश्र-त्वभेदात् त्रेधापि तत् त्रिधा । प्रख्यातमितिहासादेरुत्पाद्यं कविकल्पितम् । मिश्रं च सङ्करात्ताभ्यां दिव्यमर्त्यादिभेदतः ॥ दशरूपक १.१५-१६.

2 cf. तस्य चाष्टौ भविष्यन्ति सुमाल्यप्रमुखाः सुताः ।
य इमां भोक्ष्यन्ति महीं राजानः स्म शतं समाः ॥
नव नन्दान् द्विजः कश्चित् प्रपन्नानुद्धरिष्यति ।
स एव चन्द्रगुप्तं वै द्विजं राज्येऽभिषेक्ष्यति ॥
भागवत XII. 1. 10 f.

Also cf. वायु० 99. 326 ff.

3 The author of the दशरूपक seems to have held वृहत्कथा as the source of the मुद्राराक्षसः cf. तत्र वृहत्कथामूलं मुद्राराक्षसम् ।

चाणक्यनाम्ना तेनाथ शकटालगृहे रहः ।

कृत्यां विधाय सहसा सपुत्रो निहतो नृपः ॥

योगानन्दे यशःशेषे पूर्वनन्दमुत्ततः ।

चन्द्रगुप्तः कृतो राजा चाणक्येन महौजसा ॥

इति बृहत्कथायां सूचितम् । दशरूपामवलोक p. 34.

4. cf. येन शस्त्रं च शास्त्रं च नन्दराजगता च भूः ।

अमर्षेणोद्धृतान्याशु तेन शास्त्रमिदं कृतम् ॥

अर्थशास्त्र, p. 431.

5 cf. यस्याभिचारवज्रेण वज्रज्वलनतेजसः ।

पपात मूलतः श्रीमान् सुपर्वा नन्दपर्वतः ॥

एककी मन्त्रशक्त्या यः शक्तः शक्तिधरोपमः ।

आजहार नृचन्द्राय चन्द्रगुप्ताय मेदिनीम् ॥

नीतिशास्त्राभृतं धीमानर्थशास्त्रमहोदधेः ।

य उद्दधे नमस्तस्मै विष्णुगुप्ताय वेधसे ॥

कामन्दक quoted by धुण्डिराज.

6 cf. भागवत XII. 1.8-15; वायु 99.326-333.

7 For the Greek versions of this story, Read Dr. Raghavan, मुद्राराक्षसकथा, Introduction, pp. 78 ff.

8 cf. II. 7 and VI. 6.

9 For the early life of चन्द्रगुप्त based mainly on the Jain sources and copious references to the other sources, cf. B. C. Low Volume, Part I. pp. 590-610. Also read Dr. Raghavan, op. cit, pp 68 ff.

10 It is curious to note that though generally विशाखदत्त refers to चन्द्रगुप्त as मौर्य, in one place (II. 6) he has called him मौर्यपुत्र.

11 cf. II. 7 and VI. 6.

12 In spite of all attempts to explain this term, it must be admitted that it was generally regarded as not being very commendable, as is clear from the कबुकिन्'s remark, 'तत् स्थाने खल्वस्य वृषलोचश्चन्द्रगुप्तः ।' Act III.

13 cf. दीर्घप्रवासिनः प्रव्रजितस्य प्रेतस्य वा भार्या सप्त तीर्थान्याकाङ्क्षेत । संवत्सरं प्रजाता । ततः पतिसोदर्यं गच्छेत् । बहुषु प्रत्यासन्नं धार्मिकं धर्मसमर्थं कनिष्ठमभार्यं वा । तदभावेऽप्यसोदर्यं सपिण्डं तुल्यं वा । आसन्नमेतेषामेव क्रमः ॥

अर्थशास्त्र III. 4.

14 cf. उच्छिन्नाश्रयकृतातरेव कुलटा गोत्रान्तरं श्रीर्गता । MR. VI. 5.

15 कौटिल्य has given the circumstances under which all prisoners are to be released, at अर्थशास्त्र II. 36.

16 Abhinavagupta in his commentary on the नाट्यशास्त्र has quoted from प्रतिज्ञाचाणक्य, a play on the same story apparently as that of the मुद्राराक्षस, composed by महाकवि भीम. This play, when it comes to light, might throw good light on some of the problems concerning विशाखदत्त and his मुद्राराक्षस.

CHAPTER VI

1 p. 84 ff.

2 p. 20, and p. 42f.

3 for def. see दशरूपक I. 67

4 pp. 20, 22 and 24.

5 p. 100. In fact राक्षस recognizes in as ईश्वरी वाक्.

6 cf. एकाहाचरितैकार्थमित्थमासन्ननायकम् ।

पात्रैस्त्रिचतुरैरङ्गस्तेषामन्तेऽस्य निर्गमः ॥ दशरूपक ३.३६.

7 It may be observed that the distance separating Kusuma-pura from the capital of Malayaketu is over a hundred yojanas according to IV. 1 which reads योजनशतं समधिकं in some editions.

8 pp. 22, 26, 32 (twice), 34 (twice), 84, 136 (twice) and 140.

9 cf. I. 6.

10 The festival is referred to as पार्वण विधि (Full-moon festival at III. 10.)

11 cf. IV. 19.

12 cf. अथ दशमो मासस्तातस्योपरतस्य । (p. 102).

13 p. 66.

14 cf. IV. 16-17.

15 cf. इदानीं प्रत्यासन्ने कुसुमपुरे न कोऽप्यमुद्रालान्छितो निर्गन्तुं प्रवेष्टुं वाजुमोक्षते । (p. 124).

16 In fact राक्षस hears the tumultuous cries of joy raised by चन्द्रगुप्त's men at मलयकेतु's capture in act VI. cf. अये किमिदमस्मिन् काले पटुपटह्रशङ्खमिश्रो नान्दीनादः । et seq.

17 The time required for going from कुसुमपुर to मलयकेतु's capital can be roughly calculated from the fact that Act I is separated from Act III by at least one month (i. e. from one पौर्णिमा to another) which, therefore, is approximately the period required for a man to make a return journey from one place to the other.

18 cf. आर्यं, चिरदर्शनेनार्यस्य वयमुद्विग्नाः । (p. 142). The last visit that मलयकेतु paid to राक्षस was in Act IV (p. 102),

19 p. 172. Also see p. 160.

20 cf. प्रसीदतु वयस्यः । दृष्टमात्र एवार्थचाणक्येनाज्ञप्तोऽस्मि यथा—'सिद्धार्थक गच्छ । इमं प्रियोदन्तं देवस्य चन्द्रभियो निवेदय' इति । तत एतस्य निवेद्यैवमनुभूतपार्थिवप्रसादोऽहं प्रियवयस्यं प्रेक्षितुं तवैव गेहं चलितोऽस्मि । (p. 156).

21 cf. p. 10.

22 cf. बीजबिन्दुपताकाख्यप्रकरीकार्यलक्षणाः ।

अर्थप्रकृतयः पञ्च ता एताः परिकीर्तिताः । दशरूपक १-१८

23 cf. अवस्थाः पञ्च कार्यस्य प्रारब्धस्य फलार्थिभिः ।

आरम्भयत्नप्राप्त्याशानियतासिफलगमाः ॥ दशरूपक १-१९

24 cf. अर्थप्रकृतयः पञ्च पञ्चावस्थासमन्विताः ।

यथासंख्येन जायन्ते मुखाद्याः पञ्च सन्धयः ॥

अन्तरैकार्थसम्बन्धः सन्धिरेकान्वये सति ।

मुखप्रतिमुखे गर्भः सावमर्शोपसंहतिः ॥ दशरूपक १.२२—२४

25 cf. दशरूपक १-२५.

26 cf. दशरूपक १-३०.

27 cf. दशरूपक १-३६.

28 cf. दशरूपक १-४३ where it is named अवमर्श.

29 cf. दशरूपक १-४८.

30 This paragraph is based on statements made by धुण्डिराज in his commentary on the मुद्राराक्षस.

31 These are defined as follows:-

सर्वश्राव्यं प्रकाशं स्यादश्राव्यं स्वगतं मतम् ।

and त्रिपताकाकरेणान्यानपवार्यान्तरा कथाम् ।

अन्योन्यामन्त्रणं यत् स्याज्जनान्ते तज्जनान्तिकम् ॥

दशरूपक १.६४—६५

32 cf. The stage-direction प्रविश्य पटाक्षेपेण (p. 184).

33 cf. The direction ततः प्रविशति जवनिकावृतशरीरो मुखमात्रदृश्यः चाणक्यः । (p. 186).

34 cf. The stage direction जवनिकां करेणापनीयोपसृत्य च । (p. 186).

35 The existence of other curtains, which could be dropped or raised when necessary is also proved by stage-directions which make a person enter the stage seated on a seat (प्रविशति आसनस्थः) [p. 74] together with (सह, pp. 98 and 138), or followed by (अनुगम्यमानः, P. 40) another person or persons.

CHAPTER VII

1 cf. वत्स, श्रोत्रियाक्षराणि प्रयत्नलिखितान्यपि नियतमस्फुटानि भवन्ति (p. 22).

2 cf. कायस्थ इति लघ्वी मात्रा । (p. 16).

3 cf. विष्णुगुप्त, न मां चाण्डालस्पर्शदूषितं स्पृष्टुमर्हसि । (p. 186).

4 cf. The soliloquy of मल्लिकेतु in Act IV. (p. 102).

5 cf. स सम्प्रति, दत्ताभरणादिविभवो ज्वलनं प्रवेष्टुकामो नगरान्निष्कान्तः । (p. 168).

6 cf. आर्यं यद्येवं तदिदानीमकालः कुलजनस्य निर्वर्तितुम् । (p. 180).

7 cf. भर्तृश्वरणावनुगच्छन्त्या आत्मानुग्रहो भवतीति (p. 182).

8 cf. चन्दनदासः—आर्ये दुर्व्यवसितमिदं त्वया । अयं पुत्रकोऽश्रुतलोक-
संव्यवहारो बालोऽनुग्रहीतव्यः ।

कुटुम्बिनी :—अनुगृह्यन्त्वेनं प्रसन्ना देवताः । (p. 182).

9 cf. तस्याः कुमारसंरोधसम्भ्रमप्रचलिताङ्गुलेः करात् पुरुषाङ्गुलिपरिणाहप्रमाण-
घटिता विगलितेयमङ्गुलिमुद्रिका देहलीवन्धे पतिता उत्थिता तथा अनवयुद्धैव
मम चरणपार्श्वं समागत्य प्रणामनिभृता कुलवधूरिव निश्चला संवृता । (p. 20).

10 cf. उच्छिन्नाश्रयकातरेव कुलटा गोत्रान्तरं श्रीर्गता । VI. 5.

11 cf. I. 1

12 cf. I. 2

13 cf. III. 21

14 cf. VII. 19.

15 cf. VI. 10.

16 cf. अये अस्तामिलाषी भगवान् भास्करः । (p. 120)

17 cf. I-17-18.

18 cf. नामान्येषां लिखामि ध्रुवमहमधुना चित्रगुप्तः प्रमार्ष्टु । I. 20

19 cf. बुद्धानामपि चेष्टितं स्वचरितैः क्लिष्टं विशुद्धात्मना । VII. 5.

20 cf. कथं क्षणिक आगच्छति । यावदस्याशकुनभूतं दर्शनं मम संमतमेव ।
तस्मान्न परिहरामि । (p. 122).

21 cf. राक्षसः — [आत्मगतम् । अनिमित्तं सूचयित्वा] कथं प्रथममेव
क्षपणकः ।

पुरुषः — जीवसिद्धिः ।

राक्षसः — (प्रकाशम्) अवीभत्सदर्शनं कृत्वा प्रवेशय । (p. 116).

22 cf. I. 6

23 cf. (वामाक्षिस्पन्दनं सूचयित्वा आत्मगतम्) कथं प्रथममेव सर्पदर्शनम् ।
(P. 44)

24 See pp. 44 and 100.

25 See pp. 20, 22, 24 and 100. It may be noted that राक्षस
actually designates this as वागीश्वरी.

26 cf. The conversation between चन्दनदास and his wife in
Act VII (pp. 180 ff).

27 cf. दुर्लभास्ते खलु मानुषा य एतस्मिन्काले दृष्टिपथेऽपि तिष्ठन्ति । (p. 180).

28 cf. एतेऽस्मत्प्रियवस्या अश्रुपातमात्रेण कृतनिवापसलिला इव कथमपि
प्रतिनिवर्तमाना बाष्पगुर्व्या दृष्ट्या मामनुगच्छन्ति । (p. 180).

29 cf. p. 32

30 cf. कुतः सुखं येन त्वं चिरप्रवासप्रत्यागतोऽप्यद्य न मे गेहमागच्छसि । (p. 154)

31 cf. अहमपि यावत्तस्याश्रोतव्यं न शृणोमि तावदात्मानमुद्वध्य व्यापादयितुमिदं जीर्णोद्यानमागतः । (p. 168); किमस्य भवतो यथा सुहृद एव नाशोऽवशः । VI. 16; and ततो यावदस्य चन्दनदासस्याश्रोतव्यं न शृणोमि तावज्ज्वलनं प्रविशामीति श्रेष्ठी विष्णुदासो नगरान्निष्क्रान्तः । (p. 172).

32 Like शक्रदत्त whose innocence was happily conveyed to राक्षस later on in Act VII.

33 Like the म्लेच्छ allies of मलयकेतु sentenced to be killed at the end of Act V.

34 As done by राक्षस in the case of मलयकेतु.

35 cf. V. 4.

36 See p. 160.

37 cf. III. 14.

38 cf. धिक् मूर्ख, किं भवानस्मदुपाध्यायादपि धर्मवित्तरः । and मूर्ख. सर्वज्ञतामुपाध्यायस्य चोरयितुमिच्छसि । (p. 14)

39 cf. ये सत्यमेव हि गुरुनतिपातयन्ति III. 33.

40 cf. स च मया कथमपि पातकमिवाभ्युपगतः (p. 70); and III. 33.

41 cf. वत्स कार्याभिनियोग एवास्मान् व्याकुलयति । न पुनरुपाध्यायसहभू, शिष्यजने दुःशीलता । (p. 6).

42 cf. प्रारब्धाः प्रलयाय मांसवदहो विक्रेतुमेते वयम् । V. 22.

43 भद्रभट and पुरुषदत्त have been apparently dismissed because they were स्त्रीमद्यमृगयाशील. (p. 86).

44 Such kings are technically known as सचिवायत्तसिद्धि.

45 That is why भागुरायण is afraid that मलयकेतु would order राक्षस to be put to death. See p. 132.

46 cf. पृथिव्यामस्खलितपूर्वं देवस्य शासनं कथं पौरेषु स्खलिष्यति । (p. 72). Also read III. 22 and 23.

47 cf. प्रीताभ्यः प्रकृतिभ्यः प्रतिप्रियमिच्छन्ति राजानः । (p. 28); संक्षेपतो राजन्यविरुद्धाभिर्द्वैतिभिः । (p. 28).

48 cf. VII. 1-2.

49 cf. राज्यं हि नाम राजधर्मानुवृत्तिपरस्य नृपतेर्महदप्रीतिस्थानम् । and the stanza that follows. (p. 70).

50 cf. स दोषः सचिवस्यैव यदसत् कुरुते नृपः । III. 32.

51 cf. प्रज्ञाविक्रमभक्तयः समुदिता येषां गुणा भूतये ते मृत्या नृपतेः I. 15.

52 cf. III. 32 ; II. 1.

53 cf. III. 14 ;and VI. 12.

54 cf. VII. 14.

55 cf. बहुविधदेशवेशभाषासम्भारवेदिनः नानाव्यञ्जनाः प्रणिधयः । (p. 10).

56 e. g. अभयदत्त.

57 cf. एतेषु त्रयः प्रथमे मदीयां भूमिं कामयन्ते ते गभीरश्चभ्रमभिनीय पांशुभिः पूर्यन्ताम् । (p. 152).

58 इतरौ हस्तिबलकामुकौ हस्तिनैव घात्येताम् । (P. 152).

59 cf. ततः प्रविशति द्वितीयाण्डालानुगतो वध्यवेशधारी शूलं स्कन्धेनादाय कुटुम्बिन्या पुत्रेण चानुगम्यमानश्चन्दनदासः । (P. 178).

60 cf. PP. 172 ff.

61 cf. वृषल एवास्य प्राणहरं दण्डमाज्ञापयिष्यति । (P. 34).

62 cf. विना बाहनहस्तिभ्यो मुच्यतां सर्वबन्धनम् । VII. 17.

63 cf. II. 13-14; and IV. 16-17; VII. 15.

64 cf. एतेषु प्रथमगृहीतास्त्रयो राजानो मलयकेतोर्विषयमिच्छन्त्यपरौ हस्तिबलं कोषं च । (P. 138); also see Nos. 57 and 58 above.

65 cf. ततः प्रमृति सारसाधनसमेतेनेतो निष्कर्म्यार्यचाणक्येन प्रतिपन्नं सकलराज-लोकसहितमशेषं म्लेच्छबलम् । (p. 158).

66 cf. अहो विवेकशून्यता म्लेच्छस्य । कुतः et seq. (p. 162).

67 I. 8; VII. 6; III. 22.

68 III. 32

69 1-27

70 II. 11

71 III. 7

72 III. 20

73 III. 8. Besides are mentioned भुजगी (I. 8); भुजग (III. 11); नाग (III. 21); नक्र and मकर (VII. 6).

74 cf. I. 20; V. 11; and also p. 48.

75 III. 19; विन्ध्य also is mentioned at IV. 17.

76 IV. 16.

77 III. 9.

78 III. 19.

79 cf. शक्यवनकिरातकाम्बोजपारसीकबाल्हीकप्रभृतिभिः (p. 48).

80 cf. म्लेच्छैरद्विज्यमाना भुजयुगमधुना संधिता राजमूर्तेः । VII. 18.

81 III. 15-16.

82 P. 126

83 P. 160

84 P. 18

85 P. 48

86 II. 19; VII. 7.

87 PP. 190 f.

88 P. 192

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